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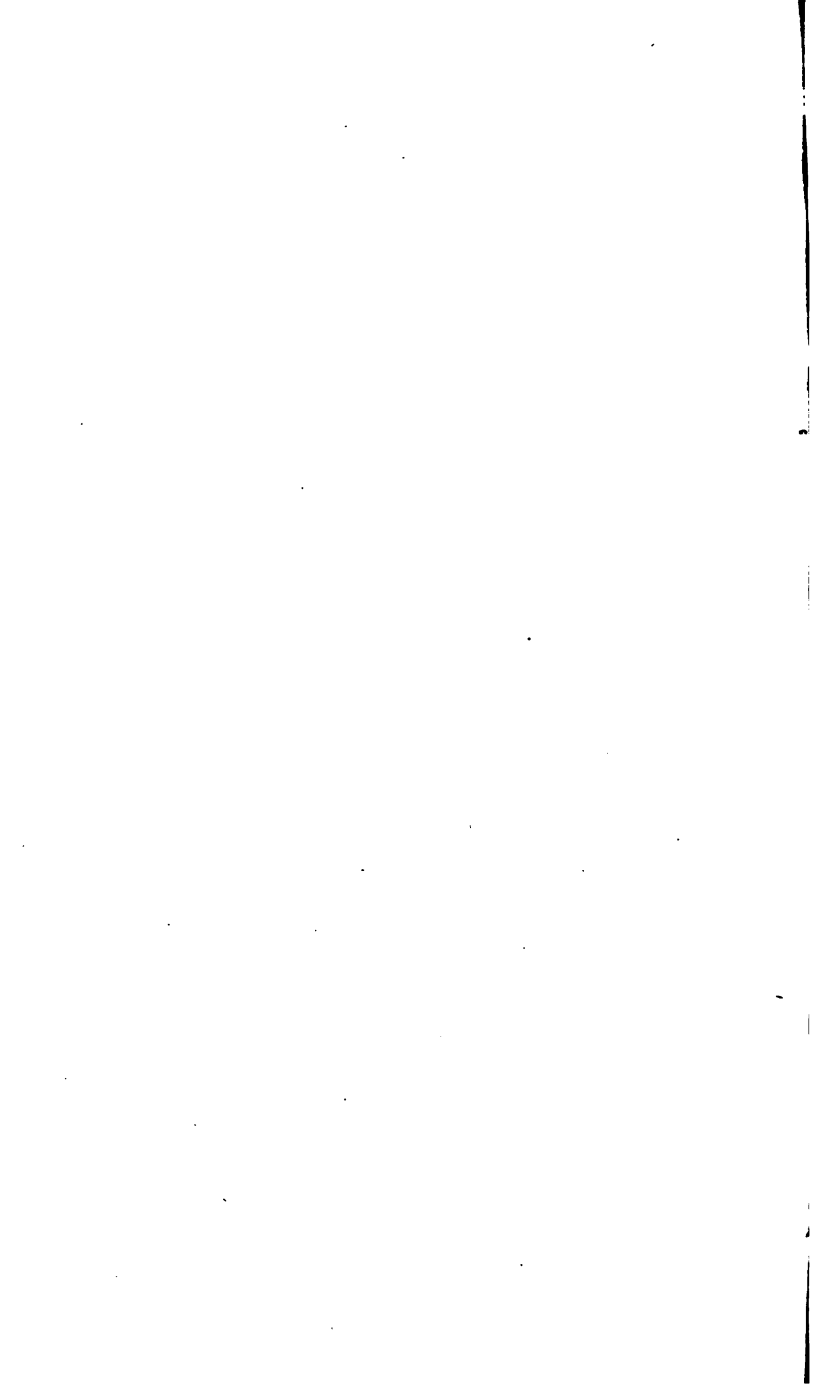
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THE
DUTCHMAN'S FIRESIDE.

A TALE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"LETTERS FROM THE SOUTH," "THE BACKWOODSMAN,"
"JOHN BULL IN AMERICA," &c. &c.

[Wm. H. Paulding]
"Somewhere about the time of the old French war."

FIFTH EDITION.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE idea of the following tale was conceived on reading, many years ago, "The Memoirs of an American Lady," by Mrs. Grant, of Laggan; and the work partly finished about that time. The reader acquainted with the book referred to will, perhaps, wonder at the indiscretion of the author of the Dutchman's Fireside in thus, as it were, provoking a comparison with one of the finest sketches of early American manners ever drawn.

April, 1831



THE

DUTCHMAN'S FIRESIDE.

CHAPTER I.

Rural Scenes and rural Manners.

"SOMEWHERE about the time of the old French war," there resided on the rich border that skirts the Hudson, not a hundred miles from the good city of Albany, a family of some distinction, which we shall call Vancour, consisting of three brothers whose names were Egbert, Dennis, and Ariel, or Auriel as it was pronounced by the Dutch of that day. They were the sons of one of the earliest as well as most respectable of the emigrants from Holland, and honourably sustained the dignity of their ancestry, by sturdy integrity, liberal hospitality, and a generous public spirit.

On the death of the old patriarch, who departed this life almost a century old, according to the custom of those early times, the estate was amicably divided among his three sons; the portion of the eldest being alone distinguished from that of the others by comprising the old mansion-house. This was the sole compliment paid to the right of primogeniture, which in almost every other Christian country swallows up the inheritance of the younger offspring, and enables one man to wallow in overgrown luxury, at the expense of all the rest of his blood and name.

This concession was rather a voluntary acknowledgment of the younger, than claimed by the elder brother. Neither at this early period of our infancy was it the general custom for people that had children to make their wills; and however singular it may seem, there were fewer lawsuits concerning the division of property among heirs, than there is now, when such particular care is taken in the devising of estates, that it generally takes three or four courts, six or eight lawyers, and the like number of years to interpret the oracle. And how can it be otherwise, since I once heard a great pleader affirm, that there never were three words put together, in any language, that would not admit of three different interpretations. Here, however, there was no necessity for the interference of strangers; the children knew the wishes of their parents, and for the most part complied without a murmur.

The settlement of Mr. Vancour's affairs was actually made without consulting a lawyer; partly, perhaps, for the reason that there was no person of that description within less than one hundred and sixty miles, at New-York. According to Pliny, Rome subsisted five hundred years without a physician; which fact, however incredible it may appear, is equalled by the miracle of the city of Albany and the surrounding country having flourished for the best part of a century without the aid of a single lawyer. People can no more go to law without lawyers, than to war without arms; deprive them of both, and there would be no more occasion for peace societies. But to return.

Among the many good old fashions that prevailed in the days of ignorance and simplicity among our forefathers, was that of paying their debts themselves,

instead of leaving it to their posterity. They knew little or nothing of the virtues of the *post obit*; nor, I believe, did it ever happen to occur to them, that it was a capital speculation to revel in luxuries and support a splendid establishment during life, leaving the penalty to be paid by their offspring. When old Mr. Vancour died, he paid the only debt he owed—the debt of nature.

In the division of the estate, Egbert, the elder brother, received the third part, which occupied the centre, with the old mansion-house; Dennis, that on the right, and Ariel, that on the left-hand. Each of these occupied the space which lay between a range of hills and the banks of the Hudson, on which they bordered about two miles equally. With a view to this arrangement, Mr. Vancour had erected, at different times, a comfortable mansion on either of the extremities of his estate; so that the two younger brothers were saved the expense of building.

At the period in which our history commences, the old gentleman had been dead many years, and Ariel, the youngest of the three brothers, was fast sliding towards that stage of life in which a man runs imminent risk of being set down as an old bachelor by the young ladies. Dennis, the second brother, was a widower without issue; and Egbert was blessed with a most notable wife, the mother of an only daughter verging towards womanhood, and finishing her education at a boarding-school in New-York. The house occupied by Mr. Vancour was built when it was customary for men to anticipate the possibility of their descendants', some one of them at least, inheriting and dwelling in their old nestling places. It was a large four square mansion of two low stories, built of little yellow Dutch bricks, imported from

Holland, as much from veneration for the "Faderland," as from a certain unconsciousness of the capacity to do any thing out of the ordinary way, that long beset and still in some degree besets the occupants of this western world. Right through the centre ran a wide and stately hall, wainscotted with oak; from the farther end of which a broad staircase rose in such a gentle ascent as to be almost as easy as a railway. This staircase was defended on the outside by a row of chubby mahogany banisters, ranged so as almost to touch each other, and presenting in their plump exuberance fit models for the legs of all the gallant burghers of the country round. We know not whether it was in sympathy with these classical patterns, or from some other more occult influence, but certain it is, there hath not, since the fashion of them changed, been seen so goodly a set of legs, not even in the picture of the Declaration of our Independence, as was exhibited every Sabbath-day in summer-time, in woollen hose, at the little eight-square stone church of the Flats, at the time of which we are treating.

The furniture of the mansion corresponded with its Doric dignity and simplicity. There was nothing too fine for use, or which was not used whenever occasion required; although we are willing to confess, there was one hallowed room, dignified with the name of the spare room, which was difficult of access, and into which no one intruded except on very particular occasions. Here was the sacred deposite of ancestral heirlooms. Chairs with high and haughty backs and worked satin bottoms, from the old country; a Brussels carpet; two vast china jars, on either side of the chimney, nearly five feet high; and the treasure of all treasures, a Dutch cabinet, exactly such

a one as is now to be seen at Hampton court, left there by King William, so exuberantly and yet so tastefully and richly ornamented with brass hinges and a lock covering almost half its front, that when properly rubbed, as it was every day, it was dazzling to behold. The brass had a silvery whiteness, a delicate lustre, such as is never exhibited by the bastard imitation of these degenerate days. But the most valued and valuable part of the embellishments, were a number of fine pictures of the Flemish school, which the elder Mr. Vancour had brought with him from Holland, and which have since been lost by the burning of the mansion of one of his later descendants.

The house stood about a quarter of a mile from the river, in the midst of a rich meadow, dotted here and there with a vast primeval elm, standing like a wide umbrella, under which the lazy herds lay ruminating free from the midday sun. Four of these surrounded and almost hid the mansion, all but its front, and furnished retreats for a host of twittering birds. Within a hundred yards on one side ran a brook, which descended from the hills about a mile in the rear, and which in the course of ages had made a deep ravine, skirted on either side with a wilderness of various woods, and plants, and briers, and wild flowers, and vines of every sort, where was, in the genial season, a perpetual concert of nature's never-tiring and never-tired songsters. This copse was wide enough to shelter an invisible road, the only passage to and from the home ; so that all around it was nothing but one fair carpet of delicious green, unbroken by road or pathway.

The river in front slept between its verdant banks, for its course was so slow, so quiet, so almost imperceptible, that it seemed to partake in that repose which

it diffused all around. Besides the elms and sycamores which the rich alluvion fostered into majestic exuberance, its borders were fringed at intervals with silvery willows drinking its pure moisture, and other dwarfish fry, from whose branches hung grape vines and vines of various other names, forming canopies, through which the pattering shower could scarcely win its way. The stream was about a quarter of a mile wide, so that every rural sight and rural sound could be clearly distinguished from side to side; and at the extremity of the rich meadows on the opposite shore, there rose a bold precipice of gray-beard rocks, enamelled with light green mosses, and bearing on its summit a crown of towering pines of everlasting verdure.

There is certainly in the majesty of nature, its hoary rocks, its silent shadowy glens, foaming torrents, and lofty mountains, something that awakens the soul to high contemplation and rouses its slumbering energies. But there is in her gentler beauties, her rich and laughing meadows enamelled with flowers, and joyous with sprightly birds, her waving fields of grain, her noiseless glassy streams, a charm not less delightful and far more lasting than the high wrought enthusiasm of the other. Both have, without doubt, their influence on the human character. He who dwells in the rude regions of the mountain solitude will generally prefer dangerous and fatiguing enterprise to easy and wholesome labours. He would rather risk his safety for a meal, or go without it entirely, than earn it by the sweat of his brow in the cultivation of the earth. But the inhabitant of the rich plain, that pours from its generous bosom an ample reward for every hour of labour he bestows, is enamoured of security; he hates all changes

but those of the revolving seasons ; is seldom buffeted by extremes of passion, never elevated to enthusiasm, or depressed to despair. If let alone, his life will probably glide away as noiselessly, if not as pure, as the gentle stream that winds its way unheard through his lowland domain. It has been said a thousand times, that the inhabitants of mountains are more attached to their homes than those of the lowlands ; but I doubt the truth of the observation. Take any man away from his home and his accustomed routine of life, and he will sigh to return to them, the native of the plain, as well as the sojourner among the hills. The former we doubt would be as wretched among the rocks and torrents, the wild beasts, and hunters equally wild, as the latter in the laborious quiet of the fruitful valleys.

However this may be, the brothers to whom the reader has just been introduced, partook in a great degree of the character of the scene of their birth and of their inheritance, but modified in some particulars by certain peculiarities in their situation. Peaceful as was the abode they inhabited, and the aspect of all around them, they were not always reposing in the lap of security. Within thirty or forty miles, in almost every direction, roamed various tribes of Indians, whose fierce, unsteady, and revengeful nature made their friendship as precarious as their enmity was terrible. True, they were now at peace, or rather they had begun to submit to their inevitable destiny ; yet still their friendship could not be relied on, and they not unfrequently approached the neighbouring settlements in the dead of the night, where they committed the most horrible atrocities. This state of things contributed to keep up a warlike spirit and habits of dangerous enterprise, among the early

settlers, and they partook of the opposite character of husbandman and soldier, in a degree which has seldom been known in the inhabitants of the rest of the world. The Vancours and their neighbours all found it necessary to mingle the arts of peace and war together; all had their arms at hand, and all knew how to use them.

The Vancours were people of fashion, as well as fortune. The elder more especially, from inhabiting the family mansion, and having a regularly established household, saw a great deal of company at times from Albany, New-York, and elsewhere. His house, indeed, was open to all respectable visitors, and was seldom without the presence of some stranger, friend, or relative from a distance. They were received and treated with that plain, unostentatious, quiet hospitality which always bespeaks a welcome. Madame Vancour, as she was called by way of eminence, was a New-York lady, born and bred, partaking almost equally in the blood of the genuine Hollander, the Englishman, and the Huguonot. New-York, being at that time the residence of the English governor, was of course, the focus of fashion. The governor affected somewhat of the kingly state; and there being always a considerable number of troops in garrison, the place swarmed with red coats, as some of our eating cellars now do with boiled lobsters. These ruddy sons of Mars were the prime objects of the ambition of our city belles, and happy was the damsel and proud the mother that could unite their fate and family with the lieutenant of a company of British grenadiers. His excellency, like most other excellencies, had plenty of aids-de-camp to keep up his state, write his invitations, pick up news, and carve at his table. These important functions, of course,

entitled them to great distinction among our provincial belles, and it is on record in the traditions of those times, that the good matrons of the capital could never sleep quietly the night before a ball at the government-house, for thinking whether their daughters would dance with an aid-de-camp. They occasionally demeaned themselves by marrying a provincial heiress, and many of the largest estates in the province, with a blooming damsel at the back of them, were exchanged for a red coat and a pair of gorgeous epaulettes, to the infinite contentment of the mothers, who partook largely in the dignity of the connexion. I cannot affirm that the fathers and brothers shared in these triumphs; for already the fine airs of the pompous intruders, and their undisguised assumptions of superiority, had awakened in the bosoms of these homely provincials a feeling, which, in after-times mingling with others equally powerful, produced a revolution, of which the world yet feels, and will long feel the influence. The Vancours had many connexions in New-York, among the most wealthy and fashionable of the inhabitants, and seldom missed paying them a visit of a few weeks in the course of every autumn. They were always well received, and as the governor never came to Albany, without partaking in their hospitalities, he thought himself bound to repay them when they visited the place of his residence. This intercourse with the gay world kept up certain feelings and habits, which seldom fail to accompany it; but still, in the main, their characters partook largely of the simplicity of the country where they resided. In manners they might not be particularly distinguished from the polite and well-bred people of the world; but in habits and modes of thinking they were essentially different.

There was a certain doric simplicity in their mode of life, which has long since passed away, leaving behind what I sometimes feel inclined to doubt is but an inadequate compensation for its loss.

Dennis and Ariel, the two younger brothers, being the one a lonely widower, the other an equally lonely bachelor, spent a good deal of their time at the old mansion, where they were as much at home as at their own houses. The two elder brothers were greatly attached to each other, and fond of being together in their own quiet way. They sometimes passed a whole morning without exchanging half a dozen words. They had a way of communicating their thoughts by certain little expressive inarticulate sounds and unobtrusive gestures, which each one understood as well as he did his mother tongue. Ariel, on the contrary, was ungovernably impatient of idleness, and never could sit still fifteen minutes at a time without falling into a doze. He was a great hand at grafting and inoculating fruit-trees; an industrious seeker after mushrooms; and mighty in all undertakings which had for their object the furtherance of good eating. In truth, he was one of those persons who are seldom without a project for the benefit of their neighbours, and who, though they never by any chance succeed in their own undertakings, can always tell to a nicety what will be most for the advantage of others. Dennis, on the contrary, had a horror of all innovation and improvement in rural economy; he despised labour-saving machines from the bottom of his soul, and held it as incontrovertible, that the human hand was the most perfect instrument ever invented. Ariel one year spent the proceeds of a whole crop in devising inventions for exterminating field mice; while Egbert secured half of his by labour and

attention. Somehow or other, so it was, that one grew richer every year, and the other was always in want of money.

"They won't be here to-day," said Dennis, one morning, after his elder brother and himself had been sitting with their heads inclined towards each other about two hours, without exchanging a word.

"They won't be here to-day," echoed Egbert, and there ended the conversation for an hour at least.

"I think it will clear up before noon," quoth Dennis, eyeing the clouds as they separated above, disclosing a little piece of clear blue sky.

"I think it will," responded Egbert, and the matter was settled.

The expected arrivals were Colonel Vancour's wife and daughter, the latter of whom, having finished her education at the boarding-school, was now on her way home from New-York with her mother. The reader will be pleased to recollect that this was long before the invention of steamboats, and when a genuine Albany packet never dreamed of sailing but with a fair wind, nor scarcely ever passed the Overlaugh without paying it the compliment of running high and dry aground. We ourselves well remember, in long after-times, having once lain there seven days within seven miles of Albany; yet such appeared the immeasurable distance, that no one on board ever dreamed of leaving the vessel and going to the city by land. All waited patiently for an easterly-wind or a heavy rain, to float them off again; and spent the time pleasantly in eating and smoking. In truth, there is no greater help to patience than a pipe of Blaze Moore's tobacco. But the fact is, people were neither so much in a hurry, nor was their time half so precious as it is now. In those days a

man was all his life in making a fortune ; at present he cannot spare so much time, because he has not only to make, but to spend a fortune before he dies. It would have been next to an impossibility to persuade a man to risk a quick passage to the other world, for the sake of shortening his journey in this.

The daughter, accompanied by her mother and Tjerck, an old black servant, had been expected more than a week, every day of which precisely the same colloquy as that we have just recorded passed between the two brothers. We ought to mention, that Mr. Egbert Vancour was prevented attending the ladies home by having been appointed a commissioner to hold a treaty with the Five Nations at Schenectady. The past week had been one of almost continual rain, and the three brothers each began to manifest impatience in his own way. The two elder by frequent emigrations from the chimney corner to the window ; and the younger by marching out every five minutes, in the intervals between his naps, squaring himself with his thick short legs wide apart, and reconnoitring the weathercock, which, I ought to mention, was an iron shad, through whose sides were cut the letters D. V., in honour of the family.

At length, towards evening the yellow sun broke through the opening western clouds, most gorgeously gilding the weeping landscape, and turning the cold drops of rain which had condensed on the grass and waving branches of the trees to sparkling diamonds bright. A brisk yet mellow south wind sprung up, and a fleet of sloops with snow white sails appeared below, ploughing their merry way up the river. All turned out to see if they could distinguish the "Patroon," the vessel in which the ladies had taken passage. The indefatigable Ariel was down at the

wharf, in front of the mansion-house, making a prodigious noise, and calling out to every vessel that passed to know if the Patroon was coming, every now and then clearing his throat, as was his custom, with "a-hem!" that at length startled a flock of black ducks, which had maintained its station in a little neighbouring cove for several days past. Sloop after sloop passed on, without stopping, until Ariel got out of all patience; he stamped about from one side of the wharf to the other; the Patroon was the worst of all vessels, and the captain the most lazy, slow motioned, stupid of all blockheads.

"I knew it; d—n him, I knew it. I'll bet my life he is high and dry on the Overslaugh.—No! hey! no: d—n it, there she comes—there she is at last;" and he darted across the wharf towards her with such enthusiasm, that he broke his shins against a post; whereat he gave the Patroon and her captain another broadside, not forgetting the post.

Ariel was not mistaken: it was the Patroon, and in a few minutes, Madame Vancour and her daughter Catalina were welcomed once more at the fire-side of their best friends, with a quiet speechless warmth which nature dictated and nature understood. All but Ariel spoke through their eyes; but it was the characteristic of that worthy bachelor, to make a noise on all occasions of merriment or sadness; the more he felt, the more noise he made, and this propensity followed him even in his sleep; he being a most sonorous and indefatigable snorer, in all its varieties. He paraded round the young woman, crying, "A-hem! bless me, how you have grown; a-hem! zounds, I should'nt have known you; why, ahem! d—n it you're almost as tall as I am!" And then he measured his little square stumpy figure with that of

the tall graceful girl. Finally, having exhausted all his waking noises, he placed himself in an arm chair and fell into a sleep, from which he was only roused by the music of setting the supper-table, which above all others was most agreeable to his ear. "Hey!—d—n it, what have you got for supper—hey!" and he marched round, taking special cognizance of the ample board.

"But where is Sybrandt?" asked Madame Vancour, "I expected, to be sure, he would be here to welcome us home."

"Oh, that's true, Dennis," said Egbert, "what has become of the boy?"

"I can't tell."

Ariel broke into one of his inspiring laughs, "I can," said he; "the poor fellow sneaked away home, as soon as he knew the Patroon was in sight."

Egbert shrugged his shoulders; Dennis twisted a piece of celery with such a petulant jirk, that he overturned the whole arrangement of the dish, the pride of Dame Nauntje, presiding goddess of the kitchen. Ariel cried, "A-hem!" like a stentor, and madame and her daughter exchanged significant looks, and smiled. Sybrandt appeared not that night, and nothing more was said on the subject.

As this young gentleman is destined to make some figure in our story, we will take this opportunity to introduce him more particularly to the reader's notice.

CHAPTER II.

The Reader is introduced to a bashful young Gentleman !

SYBRANDT WESTBROOK was the only son of a distant female kinswoman of the Vancour family ; once, it was supposed, a great favourite of Mr. Dennis, who had been suspected of something more than a mere liking to the lady. She was a beauty and an heiress, and married a British officer at New-York, who dissipated her fortune, and finally went home and never returned. She left an only son, without fortune, or a protector to his infancy. But he found one in Mr. Dennis Vancour, who, after the death of his wife, took the boy home, adopted him as his son, and superintended his education. Dennis was a worthy man, with a vast many peculiarities. He cherished the old primitive Dutch manners, and above all the old primitive Dutch language, the only one he could now ever be brought to speak, although master of English. He had a great distaste for New-York names, modes, and follies ; and ever since he was cut out by a red coat, cherished a mortal antipathy to every man who wore that livery. He disliked the new system of education daily gaining ground in the province, and the thousand innovations which its change of masters had introduced. The fashionable young men were coxcombs, and the fashionable young women only fit to dance, flirt, and make fools of themselves with the red coats.

For these and divers other substantial reasons, he determined that his adopted son should receive a domestic education, under the care of the good Dominie Stettinius, pastor of the congregation. The dominie was a staunch pillar of the Reformed Dutch church, a profound scholar, and a man of great piety as well as simplicity of character. He was bred at the famous university of Leyden; that renowned seminary, where Erasmus, Grotius, Grævius, and a thousand other illustrious scholars were educated; and where Scaliger, Salmasius, and a thousand illustrious masters presided from time to time. It was at Leyden, in the United REPUBLICS of Holland, that scholars sought refuge from monkish bigotry, that the liberty of thought, speech, and writing, maintained itself against the persecutions of church and state; and it was there that the greatest, the most indefatigable, and the most useful scholars that perhaps the world ever knew were protected as well as rewarded for their labours in the cause of learning and liberal opinions. The rival nations of France, Italy, and England have sought to monopolize the glories of learning, science, and philosophy; but if we resort to history and fact, we shall find that the civilized world is at least equally indebted to the FREE STATES OF HOLLAND, and that at one period, comprising a century or more, had they not found a refuge there, they would in all probability have been persecuted into silence, if not unto death.

Dominie Stettinius had been a laborious student, and was now a ripe scholar. This was some distinction in those days, when it required the labours of years to collect that knowledge which was then dispersed among thousands of bulky volumes, but is now collected and condensed in encyclopedias, dictionaries,

and compendiums of various kinds. But the dominie was only a scholar and a pious divine ; he possessed no one accomplishment except learning, nor had he a respect for any other ; his manners were simple, almost rustic ; and such was the sobriety of his notions, that, though a kind-hearted being as ever existed, he could hardly tolerate the smiles, the gayety, and the gambols of happy childhood.

This worthy divine, by desire of Mr. Dennis Vancouver, took the entire charge of Sybrandt, at the age of seven years, and made a great scholar of him at nineteen. The good man was so zealous in plying him with books that he forgot men, and above all, women, who are as necessary to the formation of mind and manners as they are to the creation of the man himself. The consequence was, that the youth grew up a shy, awkward, reserved, abstract being, without the vivacity of his age, and ignorant as a child of that knowledge of the world which, like small change, is essential to the every day transactions of life. There was nothing on the face of the earth he was so much afraid of as a woman, particularly a young woman, whose very presence seemed to turn him into stone, and lock up the springs of thought as well as action. But notwithstanding all this, woman was the divinity of his soul, worshipped in secret in his rural walks and solitary contemplations. Some ideal mistress of his own creation was ever present to his imagination, and the propensity to love, which is the universal characteristic of youth, only became the more intense from his entire abstraction from the will and the means of its gratification. Thus, while from a consciousness of his awkwardness and embarrassment, he shunned all personal communion with woman, his whole soul was

filled and animated by a latent smothered fire, a sleeping Cupid, which, when once roused into action by opportunity and an object, was destined to become the ruling influence of his life.

The person and aspect of Sybrandt were eminently handsome ; but his manners and address deplorably rustic and ungainly. When addressed abruptly, his awkward embarrassment had the appearance of stupidity ; and such were his habits of abstraction that he often gave the most silly answers imaginable. Thus he grew up with little to recommend him to the respect or affection of his fellow-creatures around but a sort of harmless stupidity, which the good dominie was pleased to call the gravity of wisdom. His vivacity, if nature had ever given him any, was entirely repressed by hard studies, want of company, and relaxation, reinforced by the stern gravity of the worthy Stettinius, who plied him with tasks day and night. His shoulders had become rounded like those of advancing decrepitude, and he had acquired a habit of stooping which destroyed the manliness and dignity of his figure.

With him, the happy days of childhood had been the season of perpetual toil. While he saw from the window of his scholastic prison the little urchins of the neighbourhood sporting in the meadows, or on the white sandy river-beach, and heard their shrill shouts of unchecked vivacity, nature would yearn in his heart to partake in the frolic which she herself had provided for the little sons and daughters of men. But every glance from the everlasting book of tasks was watched and checked by the good dominie, who had long outlived the recollection of his youthful feelings, and buried every impulse of nature under the mighty mass of scholastic rubbish, which the incess-

sant labours of threescore years had concentrated in his memory. Assuredly learning is a thing of almost inestimable value; but still I doubt it may be bought too dearly. Why should the season of childhood, which God and nature have ordained to be a period of freedom from cares and toils, be converted into one of labour and anxiety, for the sake of a little premature knowledge, which the early and tender intellect is unable to comprehend, or the comprehension of which requires an effort of the mind which stints its growth for ever afterward? Knowledge should only keep pace with the natural growth of the human faculties. If it comes to exceed the powers of the mind, and to be too great for the grasp of our reason and judgment, the overburthened intellect becomes but an ass, laden with treasures of no use to the bearer, and only calculated to oppress the wholesome vigour and vivacity of nature. When I see a little urchin, who ought to be enjoying nature's holyday, and strengthening his constitution by wholesome exercise to bear the vicissitudes of the world in after-times, kidnapped and sent to school, to sit on a bench for four or five hours together, employed in learning by rote what he is unable to comprehend, I cannot help contemplating him as the slave and the victim of the vanity of the parent and the folly of the teacher. Such a system is only calculated to lay a foundation for disease and decrepitude, to stint the physical and intellectual growth, and to produce a premature old age of body and mind.

Sybrandt had seen but little of his cousin Catalina, as their relationship was denominated, previous to her being sent to the boarding-school; and less of her from that time. True, the young lady spent her vacations at home, but Sybrandt was either too hard

at his studies, or too bashful to be much in her company. When this happened, he was pretty certain to be more than commonly stupid and embarrassed, so that Catalina had long set him down as little better than a sleepy country bumpkin of the first pretensions. The youth had anticipated her arrival and final sojourning at her father's mansion, as an event of great interest to him. True, he felt convinced in his own mind, that he should never dare to look her full in the face, or enjoy either ease or pleasure in her society. Yet still her abode so near him would furnish a new and charming object for his abstract devoirs and solitary contemplations. She would become the ideal companion of his rambles; the bright seraph of his imagination, and give a zest to his existence in that visionary world which furnished almost all the materials of his happiness. He was excessively anxious to see her, and punctual in his attendance at the mansion house while the storm lasted and there was no immediate prospect of the young lady's arrival; but the moment the "Patroon" came in sight his heart failed him, and he retreated into the fields, there to enjoy an imaginary meeting which he dared not encounter in reality. He embraced his cousin; kissed her cheek; made the most gallant, eloquent speeches; gazed in her face with eager eyes of admiration; and, in short, enjoyed in imagination a scene exactly opposite to that which the reality would have presented. Happy, thrice happy is the man who can thus create a paradise around him, and spin his enjoyments, as it were, from his own materials. This is a species of domestic manufacture that certainly ought to be encouraged by the government.

Mr. Dennis Vancour was somewhat indignant at

the ignominious retreat of Sybrandt, to whom he delivered a Dutch lecture at their next interview, on his sheepishness. The good man took especial care not to recollect that it was, in a great measure, owing to the system of education inflicted upon him by the dominie, with his entire approbation. He insisted on his accompanying him, the next morning, to pay his devoirs to the young lady; and accordingly an interview took place between them. On the part of Sybrandt it was shy and embarrassed, a mixture of pride and timidity; on that of Catalina, sprightly and good-humoured, with a sly expression of slighting superiority, which to one of his quick feelings was calculated to increase his embarrassment, and make him appear still more awkward and stupid. The noisy, but well-meaning Ariel, made matters still worse, by occasionally urging the young man to "buck up," as he called it, to the young lady, and show his breeding. Poor Sybrandt wished himself a thousand miles away. By the time dinner was served, his head felt like a great bag of wool, and his heart ached with an oppressive load of imaginary contempt and ridicule, which he thought he saw in the eyes of every one, more especially those of Catalina. Ariel, who sat next him was perpetually jogging him in the side, to offer some civility to the young lady, and at length wrought him up to the hardihood of asking her to take a glass of wine, which he did in a voice so low that nobody heard him.

"Try again," whispered Ariel; "zounds! man, you could not hear yourself, I am sure."

Sybrandt tried again, but his voice died away in murmurs. Ariel was out of patience. "A-hem!" roared he in a voice that made Sybrandt quake.—
"Ahem!—Catalina, your cousin asks you to drink

wine with him." The glasses were filled, but unfortunately Ariel, who was none of the smallest, sat directly between the young people and intercepted Sybrandt's view of his cousin. When Sybrandt leaned forward to catch the lady's eye, Ariel did the like, from an inherent sympathy with motion, originating in his inveterate antipathy to sitting still; and thus they continued bobbing backwards and forwards till Catalina could restrain herself no longer, and laughed outright. Habits and dispositions like those of Sybrandt never fail to take the laugh and the ridicule all to themselves, even when they are only parties concerned. The young man actually perspired with agony, and when at length he gained an opportunity of bowing to the lady, his nerves were in such a state of agitation that he was incapable of swallowing. The wine took the wrong way, and nearly suffocated the luckless lad, who was only relieved by an ungovernable fit of coughing, during which he precipitated his draught in the face of honest Ariel.

"Blitzen!" exclaimed Dennis, in an under tone; for he was extremely anxious his adopted son should do credit to his education.

"A-hem! zounds!" cried Ariel, wiping his eyes, "why, Sybrandt, one would think you mistook it for a dose of physic." The young lady exchanged a significant smile with her mother, and the good Egbert, according to his custom, said nothing.

The dinner passed off without any other catastrophe, though poor Sybrandt trembled to his very heart-strings, and shuddered when he put any thing into his mouth, lest it might go the wrong way. He escaped as soon as possible, and sought his usual communion with his friend and counsellor, solitude. Here his imagination revelled in tortures of its own

creation, and painted in the most exaggerated colours the scenes that had just occurred. Under the Doric roughness and simplicity of his appearance and manners, this young man concealed a proud sensibility, that withered under the sense of ridicule and contempt. The very thought, the very shadow of a thought, that he had been the object of either, stung him with a feeling of self-abasement, of keen-cutting mortification. Such a temper aggravates the slightest matters into stings and nettles; with a watchful, anxious solicitude, it lies in wait for poisons to nourish its own infirmity, and makes its own keen sensibilities to the merest trifles the measure of the feelings of others. In five minutes after Sybrandt's departure from the mansion-house, every circumstance connected with his mortifications was entirely forgotten by all but himself. But the recollection continued to rankle in his mind for a long while afterward, rendering him, if possible, a thousand times more shy, apprehensive, and sensitive than before. He never entered the old mansion that the scene of the dinner-table did not present itself with accumulated circumstances of mortification, paralyzing his gayety, oppressing his understanding, and giving to his actions a degree of awkward restraint that made his company painful as well as irksome to Catalina. It was indeed but seldom that he could be induced to seek her society, though she was ever the companion of his solitude; the theme of a thousand airy visions of the future, which he indulged without the remotest idea, or even wish to realize. He lived upon his own imaginings, of which, though self was always the centre, the circumference comprehended the universe. The in-

fluence of solitude on the selfish principle is almost omnipotent. He who lives to himself, and by himself, becomes as it were, the object of his own idolatry. Having little to draw off his attention from himself alone, the claims, the actions, the desires, the happiness of his fellow-creatures never intrude, or if they intrude at all, it is as mere auxiliaries, or obstacles to his supreme dominion. Upon him the social feeling, which is the source of a thousand virtues, never operates, except perhaps in some imaginary revery that calls up a momentary impulse of kindness or humanity, which dies away without ever being imbodied into action. He lives and moves, and has his being, his enjoyments, his regrets, and disappointments concentrated in himself alone.

Sybrandt was an example of these truths. His principles were all good, and he practised no vices. Yet neither his talents nor his virtues were ever brought into exercise in a communion with his fellow-beings, because his pride, timidity, and sensitiveness drove him continually from society, to nourish the perpetual contemplation of self, by pondering on the ridicule and contempt which was ever present to his imagination. Thus all his acquirements and all his good qualities lay dormant, amid the violent action of feelings and considerations that were exclusively selfish. It remained to be seen what such a being might or would become when placed in conflict with his fellows, under the incitements and temptations of the world.

CHAPTER III.

A Young Lady who would have been one hundred years old had she lived long enough.

CATALINA VANCOUR was a very pretty and, in the main, a very good girl, although she had been bred at a boarding-school at New-York, and danced with an aid-de-camp. She had lost much of the Doric, but had acquired a corresponding portion of the Corinthian. She often sighed for the more piquant and gorgeous amusements of the capital, and more especially the society of the gay gallants in scarlet uniform. But still she had not quite lost the rural feeling, nor entirely thrown off the witching influence which nature and her various beauties exercise over the hearts of those who, though they have sat at the world's great banquet, still preserve a relish for more wholesome aliment and plainer luxuries. She sometimes, in the gayety of her heart, sported with the feelings of poor Sybrandt, and rallied his shyness, unconscious of the pangs she inflicted upon his apprehensive self-love, and without noticing the dew of agony that gathered upon his forehead, as she playfully reproached him with being afraid of the young ladies.

The intercourse of young people in those times was very different from what it is at present. I pretend not that one age is, upon the whole, wiser or better than another; or to sit in judgment upon my contemporaries. But I often catch myself contem-

plating, with something like sober regret, those days of unostentatious simplicity, easy, unaffected intercourse, and manly independence. Who, indeed, that hath gathered from history and tradition a picture of the manners, modes, and morals of the ancient patriarchs of Albany and its neighbourhood, but will be inclined to contrast them dolefully with those of the present times? Who but will sigh to behold their places usurped by gilded butterflies, ostentatious beggary, empty pretence, and paltry affectation? In the room of men independent of the smiles and frowns of bankers or bankrupts, he will find speculators glittering in their borrowed plumage for an hour or two, then passing away, leaving nothing behind them but the wrecks of their unprincipled career. Where once sat the simple magistrates, administering the few simple laws necessary to regulate the orderly community over which they presided, is now collected a body of garrulous, ignorant, visionary, or corrupt legislators, pampering their own private interests at the expense of the public good, and sacrificing the prosperity of one portion of the State to the grasping avidity of another. In the room of prosperous yeomanry and independent mechanics, we behold crowds of hungry expectants, neglecting the sure and only means of competency, and begging, in the abjectness of a debased spirit, permission to sacrifice their independence for a wretched pittance, held under the wretched tenure of a man who has no will of his own. The once quiet city, where the name and the idea of political corruption was unknown, is now a whirlpool of intrigue, where empty bubbles are generated and kept alive by the agitation of the waters, and boiling and conflicting eddies gather into one focus all the straws, and chaff,

and feathers, and worthless nothings, that float upon the surface of the stormy puddle.

Undoubtedly simplicity of manners is one of the great pillars of morality. It circumscribes our wants, and thus diminishes those besetting temptations to extravagance and dishonesty which originate in and receive their power from the love of dress, splendour, display, and luxury. Those who set an inordinate value upon the gratification of these vanities will come in time to sacrifice to their attainment all that solid stock of happiness which is derived from the possession of integrity and independence. An age of simplicity is therefore an age of morality; and hence it is that the wisest writers of antiquity have made simplicity of manners essential to the preservation of that liberty which cannot be sustained by a luxurious and corrupt people. That our own high feelings of independence are rapidly fleeing away before the quick steps of ostentation and luxury, and that the love of wealth, as the means of attaining to these gratifications, is becoming the ruling passion, must be obvious to all observers.—But enough of this; the subject belongs to graver heads than ours.

One smiling morning in June, when nature, to use the fashionable phrase, sent out her cards of invitation to all the living imps of earth, from two legs to a thousand, to come and revel at her banquet of flowers, zephyrs, and woodland harmonies—not forgetting the strawberries and cream—Catalina, according to the doric fashion of the times, had made a party with some of the lads and lasses of Albany to visit a little island lying lengthwise along the river, a mile or two below the mansion-house. Such parties were common in those days, when rural fields, and smiling landscapes, and woody recesses, where

vines and wild flowers, and tuneful birds, and whispering zephyrs, came in the place of crowded rooms, conflicting vanities, soul cloying confectionaries, sleepy fiddlers, and midnight revels. Here, on the soft bosom of tranquil nature, the young people rambled about till they were tired, and then sat down on the green sward under the protecting shade of some little copse of half-grown trees canopied by grape vines, forming a vast umbrella over their heads. Here, at a proper time, they brought out their stores; and a collation, to which health, exercise, and cheerful innocent hearts gave zest, succeeded. Many a sober youth and red-ripe damsel were first awakened to a gentle preference in these rich smiling solitudes; and many a long uncertain beauty was here brought, at last, to know, and acknowledge her own mind to the chosen swain.

Catalina was resolved that Sybrandt should accompany the party; not that she admired her shy and awkward cousin, or valued his society: but, I know not how it is, there is a wayward wilfulness in woman which, being common to all past times, is probably a gift of nature. We allude to the propensity to carrying a point, whether a favourite one or not; to overcome opposition—in short, to have their own way in every thing. Had Sybrandt sought her society, or discovered a disposition to be attentive, Catalina would have probably been tired to death of him in a little while, and affronted the youth downright. But he kept at a distance; he avoided her whenever he could; he sometimes excited her curiosity and sometimes her anger, by his lonely habits, and total neglect—in short, he was not to be had at all times, or at any time, and was, therefore, in spite of herself, an object of consequence to his cousin. But the dif-

sculty was to catch this wayward monster, and Ariel was deputed for that purpose. There was nothing he loved like being employed upon the affairs of other people; and Catalina had gained his whole heart by sending him to Albany every day, to purchase a paper of pins, a skein of thread, or a penny worth of some kind or other.

Ariel, who knew some of the haunts of Sybrandt, took his gun, and went, as he said, to hunt this strange animal. Among the rugged hills that bounded these rich flats inland, was a deep romantic glen, through which a fine stream tumbled in foaming volumes from rock to rock. It was overshadowed by vast pines and cedars, which threw their gloomy arms and locked their fingers half way across the abyss. Here was a perpetual twilight, throughout all times of the day and every season of the year. In the hottest days of summer there was a refreshing coolness diffused around, that came with exquisite zest to the lazy and relaxed frame, and made the spirit wax fit for vigorous thoughts. Every rock, and stump, and half-decayed branch of a mouldering tree was coated with velvet moss; and all along the margin of the brook, the green fringe kissed the foamy waters as they glanced away. It was here that Sybrandt was often found, deep in the reveries of a wandering mind, seeking some steady rational object of pursuit, and floating clumsily about without purpose, like a bark away from its anchor. His mind was a perfect chaos, wanting the powerful stimulus of some master-passion, some great pursuit to arrange its intellectual forces, and marshal them to usefulness if not to deeds of noble daring.

Ariel was an astonishing man for killing two birds with one stone. He always had two irons in the

fire at once; and nothing was more common with him than to forget them both in pursuit of a third. It is related of him, that being one day waiting with his horse to cross the ferry at Albany, he was so taken up with the "d—d stupid blundering" of the ferryman in bringing his boat to the stairs, that he let go his own bridle, whereat his horse trotted gallantly away. His master pursued, and finally came up with him. But just as he seized the bridle and turned round, he saw the ferry-boat leaving the stairs. Whereupon he let go the bridle, and ran as fast as his little short drumsticks would permit towards the boat, hallooing to the "d—d stupid blockhead" to stop. The man, being now in the current of the stream, could not or would not return. Whereupon Ariel turned round in a great passion to his horse; but the horse was gone too, past all recovery, having this time mended his pace to a gallop, and made straightway for home. So Ariel missed both ferry-boat and horse by not attending to one at a time.

As he was proceeding in the execution of his commission for Catalina, lucklessly for the wishes of that young lady, Ariel espied at some distance a noble flock of pigeons perched on a dead tree. The last thing and the last object was always sure to carry all before it with Ariel. He forgot every thing else, and trudged away with all his speed towards this new and powerful attraction. He got a copse between him and the birds; he advanced cautiously under cover; he gained a station within gunshot, while the unconscious victims sat perfectly quiet; he cocked his piece, raised it to his shoulder, and was just taking aim, when his irresistible propensity to clearing his throat came across him, and he essayed

such a stout magnificent "ahem!" that the birds took the alarm and flew away. "D—a it," quoth Ariel, and scampered after, following them with his eye, till he unfortunately plumped into a ditch, where he got most gloriously garnished with a coat-of-mail, and was fain to make the best of his way home, leaving the pigeons to their fate and Sybrandt to his solitude.

"Well, uncle," said Catalina, when she saw him, "did you see the white savage?"

"No, zounds! they all flew away," replied Ariel, thinking of the pigeons.

"Flew away! what are you talking about, uncle?"

"Why, zounds! I tell you, just as I was going to let fly at them, they flew away, and I fell into a ditch trying to follow."

"Follow whom," said the young woman, who began to suspect honest Ariel had lost his wits.

"Why, the pigeons."

"Pigeons! I thought you went in search of Sybrandt?"

"Bless my soul! a-hem! bless my soul, so I did. But the truth is, Catty, I took my gun with me, by way of company, and met a flock of pigeons that led me plump into a ditch, and I forgot all about it."

The young lady was half-vexed, half-diverted, though well acquainted with her uncle's inveterate habit of running after the last object which presented itself. He once lost an excellent opportunity of getting married, by stopping on the way to show some boys how to catch minnows.

"I'll go this minute and look for him," added Ariel, after a moment's hesitation.

"Do, uncle; but don't take your gun with you."

"No, no."

"And don't run after the pigeons."

"O no."

"And take care you don't fall into the ditch."

"O never fear," and away went the good-natured Ariel, clearing his throat with a sonorous "a-hem!"

On his way to the house of his brother Dennis, he saw a number of little peach-trees, just fit for inoculating, which tempted him sorely. But luckily for the consummation of his errand, he had left his jack-knife at home, and there was an end of the matter. He proceeded on, therefore, and found Sybrandt at home. He had been considering all the morning whether he should go over and see his pretty cousin, and had just wrought himself up to the feat, when Ariel arrived with his message, which threw him into great perplexity. In going to see her of his own accord, and alone, he had privately come to an understanding with himself, that if his heart failed him by the way he could turn back again, and nobody would be the wiser. But here was a different predicament, a message and a companion, and he felt greatly inclined to demur.

"Come, come! zounds, man, why don't you stir yourself? When I was of your age, if a pretty girl sent for me, I was off like a shot."

"Yes, but you never hit the mark, uncle," said Sybrandt, smiling.

"A-hem," quoth Ariel, "but, zounds! come along, will you? I've got fifty things to do this morning. Let me see—I promised to show the dominie how to ring his pigs' noses—after that, I must go and tell the widow Van Amburgh how her geese ought to be yoked—then to squire Vervalen's to show them how to stew mushrooms—then to Brom Van Riper's, to see if his sugar-pears are ripe—and—but come along;

d—n it, I shall never get through half my business this morning.” Accordingly he seized the youth by the arm and dragged him along, half-willing, half-reluctant. A man is sometimes pleased with a little violence, which saves him the trouble of making up his mind when he don’t know exactly what he would be at; and so is a woman if she is not very much beheld.

“ Well, here he is—I’ve caught him at last,” shouted Ariel, as he entered the hall where Catalina sat enjoying the sweet south breeze that gathered coolness as it sailed up the river.

“ What, uncle—the pigeons?” and the young lady smiled at the recollection of yesterday’s disaster.

“ No; the goose,” replied Ariel, bursting into a great laugh at his own happy rejoinder.

Reader, art thou a modest, bashful, or what is still more, a sheepish young person, as proud as Lucifer, and with feelings more wakeful and skittish than a wild partridge? and hast thou ever been made the object of laughter? If so, thou wilt be able to enter into the agonies of Sybrandt, as he stood perspiring under the consciousness that he cut rather a ridiculous figure. No one can ever know what a man suffers in such a situation, except persons of the temperament I have described. If they did—if they could enter into the recesses of their hearts, and see the strings quivering with keen and bitter mortifications, the most ill-natured, malignant being that was ever created would be careful not to play rudely upon an instrument so easily disposed to tormenting discords. There are thousands of young persons, and all of the higher order of intellect, who in the days of their probation, before their hearts are seared in the fires of indulgence, or deadened by disappointments,

suffer more from the careless disregard to their feelings, and the thoughtless ridicule indulged in by the domestic circle in which they move, than from all other causes combined.

It was thus with Sybrandt. At once a hundred daggers buried their points in the bosom of his self-love. His apprehensive pride conjured up spectre after spectre, grinning and pointing their fingers at him in bitter or playful scorn; or whispering in his ringing ear, that his cousin had sent for him to make sport with his infirmity. His mind lost its poise, and his faculties became suspended, as he stood, in awkward embarrassment, the image of stupid insensibility at the moment his heart and brain were pregnant with feelings which, could he have rallied the confidence to utter, would have astounded his uncle, and waked in the kind bosom of Catalina respect and commiseration. As it was, she considered him a proud, stupid, conceited bookworm, whose neglect of her society and marked avoidance arose from indifference to her person and contempt for her understanding. From the moment she entertained this conviction, he became an object of consequence in her eyes, and she resolved either to overcome this dislike or indifference, or revenge the injured dignity of womanhood, by worrying his pride and laughing at his airs of superiority.

Sybrandt stood twirling his hat, immersed in a chaos of conflicting feelings that took away all presence of mind, when Ariel slapped him on the shoulder, in his good-humoured boisterous way, and roared out, in a voice that caused the young man to drop his hat on the floor,—

“Zounds! man, can’t you speak? Why don’t you ask your cousin what she wants.—Hey—a-hem!

If I was a young fellow like you, I'd have got it all out of her in less than no time. But I suppose I'd better leave the young couple together—a-hem !” And with a most significant look, he departed to teach the dominie how to ring his pigs’ noses.

This allusion to the “young couple” affronted Catalina, and made poor Sybrandt feel more sheepish than ever. At length the young lady, assuming an air of taunting distance, masked under affected humility, said—

“Mr. Westbrook, I am afraid, is offended at the liberty I have taken in sending for him.”

“Indeed—I—I could not imagine—I was surprised—I—” and here his tongue cleaved to the roof of his mouth.

“I beg pardon for the liberty ; but I thought it might be agreeable to Mr. Westbrook to go with a little party to-morrow to the island, if the day is fair. But I suppose—I see you can’t leave your books. These little rural pastimes are beneath a philosopher:” and she concocted her rosy lips and ivory teeth into a pretty sneer, as she uttered this truly female oration.

“I would—I will—I should like much to go with you—but—” and here the demon of sheepishness conjured up a hundred reasons for not going.

“O, very well—I suppose Mr. Westbrook thinks the pastimes of common folks, especially young women who don’t understand Greek, beneath his notice.”

Sybrandt was a little nettled at this, and anger soon overcomes timidity.

“Miss Vancour is inclined to be satirical, I will not say ill-natured, to-day.”

“Wonderful ! why he has found his voice. Mr. Westbrook condescends to speak to a poor damsel.

Surely he mistakes her for one of the seven wise men of Greece? How could you let down your dignity so!" and the lady made him a low obeisance.

Sybrandt's face and heart glowed with a feeling of insult.

"Miss Vancour does not do me justice if she thinks me proud. She cannot know my feelings, nor enter into the mortifications I suffer daily, from the consciousness that I—that I—" and here his proud shy spirit shrunk from disclosing the wayward mysteries of his feelings and deportment. He remained silent and embarrassed; yet his face glowed with an expression, and his eye kindled with a fire, Catalina had never seen lighted there before. She was delighted to discover that he had feelings which it was in her power to awaken. It was a proof that he did not think her altogether beneath his notice.

"What is it, then," said she, "that keeps you from my father's house, where you are always welcome, from the society of the young men who would be proud of your company; and from all share in the amusements of our female friends? If it is not pride, what is it?"

At one moment Sybrandt determined to give his cousin an analysis of his feelings; the next he shrunk from the disclosure; and the conflict of opposing impulses threw his mind into such a confusion, that for the soul of him he could not utter a connected sentence.

"Well, well, Mr. Westbrook," said Catalina, after waiting the event of this struggle, "I don't wish to inquire into your secrets, nor to persuade you to go any where against your will. You had better ask the dominie's permission. I won't intrude any further on your studies." And the young lady left the room,

saying within herself, "He is not such a senseless block after all, as I thought him. A man that can blush must have a heart, certainly."

Sybrandt could have knocked his head against a stone wall. He buried himself in the woody solitudes, where his mortified pride and keen apprehensive sensibility dwelt with exaggerated agony, on the ridiculous figure he had made in this interview, the laugh of Ariel, and the cutting ridicule of his cousin. He called himself fool, oaf, idiot, in his very heart, and it may be fairly questioned whether any pang he afterward experienced, arising from actual suffering or misfortune, ever came up to the keen malignity of this his present feeling of mortified pride and insulted sensibility, combined with the consciousness that he had made himself ridiculous.

CHAPTER IV.

The Morning's smiles, the Evening's tears.

THE next morning Ariel came over, and found Sybrandt half-willing, half-afraid to accompany the party to the island, of which he was to be the commander-in-chief. Never man was so busy, so important, and so happy as the good Ariel, at having something to do for a whole day. Blessed, indeed, yea, thrice blessed is he whom trifles can make happy. It is this which forms the bliss of childhood and the consolation of old age, each of which finds its appropriate enjoyments in an exemption from the serious labours and oppressive anxieties of the world's great business.

It was a cheerful and inspiring morning as ever shone upon the rich plains of the happy Hudson—happy in being the chosen river on whose bosom floats the tide of fashion to and fro; on whose delicious borders dwell in rustic competency thousands of contented human beings, enjoying the fruits of their labours amid the fruitions of a blameless life and a quiet spirit. The day was such a one as I myself prefer to all others; when the sun diffuses his influence through a gauzy veil of semi-transparent clouds, which temper his rays into a mild genial warmth, that, while it takes, perhaps, from the vigour of the body, communicates to the mind a delicious and luxurious aptitude for the indulgence of the gentler emotions. In such days, and through such a medium, the beauties of nature exhibit only their softest features; and display their greatest varieties of shade

and colouring; the winds are hushed; the waters smooth and glassy; the foliage wears a fleecy softness; the hills appear more beautiful; the mountains, magnified in the misty vagueness of distance, seem blended with the skies; the different shades of green that deck the bosom of the earth become more distinct yet more harmonious than when basking in the glare of the sun; and every sound that meets the ear, like every object that attracts the eye, partakes in the gentle harmony that reigns all around. It is in the remembrance of such scenes in after-life, and amid the struggles, hopes, and disappointments which checker the course of manhood, that we are apt to contrast our present cares with our former enjoyments, exaggerating both, and giving a false estimate of the different periods of an existence, which, if we fairly hold the balance, will be found pretty much the same in all its various changes, from the cradle to the grave.

Our little party consisted of Master-commandant Ariel, chief manager, factotum, &c., as busy as a bee, as noisy as a caty-did, and as merry as a cricket; Catalina, Sybrandt, and some half a score of the beaux and belles of Albany, who had come to the mansion-house bright and early in the morning, all dressed in neat and simple attire, befitting a ramble among the wild roses and clambering vines of the happy island. This little paradise, to speak in learned phrase, was an alluvial formation of times long past, composed of the rich spoils of the surrounding lands, deposited by the river. It was as level as the surface of the stream in which it was embosomed, and covered with a carpet of rich, luxuriant verdure, which, when it was not pastured, gave to the scythe a glorious harvest three times a year. On

every side and all around, the banks were fringed with the light silvery foliage of the water-willows, mingled with tufts of wild roses, and growths of nameless wild flowers of every hue and various odours ; and canopied at intervals with clambering vines, whose long tendrils sometimes bent down and waved to and fro on the gliding waters as they passed slowly by. Within this leafy barrier was nothing but a green sward, shaded at various intervals by the vast giants of the alluvial growth—elms and plane-trees, of such towering majesty, that they overlooked the gentle eminences which bounded the flats on either side. The witching murmurs of the waters, as they glided along under the willow branches and nodding vines, mingled with the chorus of a thousand birds, who remained all summer in undisturbed possession ; and though the pipe of the shepherd was never heard in these pleasant abodes, it was aptly supplied by the music of harmonious nature, the murmuring waters, and the warblers of the woodlands.

Under the skilful guidance of the active, indefatigable Ariel, the little party arrived at the scene of their anticipated pleasures, all gay and happy, save our friend Sybrandt, who, from the moment he joined the group, felt the spell of the demon besetting him sorely. His gayety was repressed, his faculties benumbed, and his youthful vigour changed to a leaden inertness by that habitual shyness and awkwardness the very consciousness of which prevented all efforts to shake it off. He was always either behind or before the party, and generally too far from it to hear what was said. Thus, when the hilarity of the youthful spirit effervesced into a sprightly laugh, the demon of pride, suspicion, and consciousness, whispered that the laugh was at him. The other young men were.

indeed, quite as awkward, and without his knowledge and acquirements; but they made an excellent figure, notwithstanding, and performed their parts with a gay, gallant frankness, such as woman in all situations loves. They had lived in the world at Albany, mixed in its business, and dissipated their self-love in the pursuit of various objects, while poor Sybrandt had passed his youth in nursing the offspring of solitude—sensibility, pride, and selfishness. It is social intercourse alone that, by calling us off from self-contemplation, and making it necessary to remember and to administer to the wants or the enjoyments of others, can make man happy himself, and an instrument of happiness to others.

When they came to the river-side, where lay the little boat which was to take them to the island, Sybrandt had sworn to himself that he would offer his hand to Catalina to assist her in embarking. But he was so long before he could screw himself up to the direful feat, that one of the Albany lads, more gallant as well as alert, was beforehand with him. A bashful man is like a tiger; he makes but one effort, and if that fails, slinks away to his jungle, and essays not another. I myself have my own experience to vouch for this; having in the far-off days of my gallantry, full many a time and oft, in dining out, gathered myself together with a gallant ferocity to ask the lady of the feast for the honour of a glass of wine with her. But alas! if peradventure the lady listened not to my first demonstration, I was prone to relapse into an utter and incurable incapacity to repeat the mighty effort. The sound of my voice died suddenly, and word spoke I nevermore. So was it with master Sybrandt, who, having expended his powder in a flash of the

pan, sunk only the lower for the exertion he had made.

The little party landed, and pursued their pleasures in separate groups, or couples, as chance or inclination prompted. In those days of Doric innocence and simplicity—and thanks to Heaven, it is so still in our happy country—young people of different sexes could enjoy the pleasures of a rural ramble, in parties or in pairs, without the remotest idea of impropriety, and without waking a single breath of scandal. If there be any thing in the music, the repose, the fascinating and quiet beauties of nature that excites to love, it is gentle and virtuous love; an awakening impulse rather than an ungovernable passion; and if perchance it works to final mischief, it is rather from accident than purpose—nature than depravity. It is not here that the sensual passions acquire their overpowering energies; but at midnight revels, where dazzling lights, artificial splendours, seducing music, high-seasoned viands, and luxurious wines, pamper the senses into lascivious longings, and swell the imagination to exaggerated conceptions of pleasure, which carry us away we know not and we care not whither. Long may it be before it is the fashion to abridge the freedom of virgins, and extend that of wives, in our country.

Catalina having carried her point in making Sybrandt one of the party, was rather in a better humour with him than usual. She plagued him now and then in various sly ways, and sometimes raised a laugh at his expense. The first fine edge of the feelings, fortunately for mankind, both in pleasure and pain, is worn off by the first enjoyment and the first suffering. Were it not so—but I am insensibly becoming a moralist, when I only aspire to story-

telling. Sybrandt by degrees already felt like a musical instrument, in better tone for being played upon, and two or three times caught himself actually enjoying the scene and the festivity of his companions. The ridicule of women sometimes makes bold men only more bold and confident; and I have known a most exemplary modest person made downright saucy by the freedoms of others. Indeed there is not in the world so impudent a being, as a shy man forced out of his shyness. The very impulse carries him to the opposite extreme. The bent of Sybrandt's mind had, however, been too long and too rigid to be relaxed all at once.

I pity the most exalted of all created beings who cannot feel the inspiration of the balmy air, the music and the smiles of nature; for he can have neither sensibility nor imagination. It was not so with Sybrandt; though apparently a most unpromising pupil for the school of romance, there were, if I mistake not, certain springs of action and certain latent fires hidden and buried in his head and heart, which only required to be touched or lighted to make him a far other being than he seemed just now. As the morning passed, he insensibly began to feel less awkward, and his shyness gradually wore away. He ventured to speak to some of the young damsels, and finally had the unparalleled intrepidity to attach himself to the side of his cousin in a stroll under the vines and willows that skirted the shores of the little island.

By degrees the feelings which nature had implanted in his heart opened and expanded, like the seeds which lay dormant in the deep shades of the forest for years, until the trees being cut down, the warm sunbeams waken them to life and vegetation.

The emotions of his heart for a while overpowered his long-cherished timidity, and lent to his tongue an eloquence that pleased, while it surprised Catalina. The rich stores of imagery which long reading and contemplation had gathered in his mind, where they had lain enchained in the icy fetters of timidity, were let loose by the new-born warmth that thrilled through his frame, and flowed forth without study or effort into striking observations, tender associations, and sparkles of a rich and glowing fancy. Catalina listened with astonishment to the animated statue; and as she looked him in the face while pouring forth the treasures of his mind, and saw the divinity that sparkled in his eyes, she once or twice detected herself in thinking Sybrandt almost as handsome as an *aide-de-camp*. He, too, felt elevated in his own estimation; for the first time in his life he had listened to his own voice without feeling his heart beat with apprehension, and for the first time he could look back upon an hour spent in the society of a female, without a pang of the keenest mortification.

"Sybrandt," at length said Catalina, "why don't you talk so every day?"

"Because every day is not like to-day; nor are you, my cousin, always what you are now."

A silence ensued, from which they were roused by the cheerful, joy-inspiring shouts of Ariel, who had prepared his collation, and was summoning all the rambling lads and lasses to come and partake of the blessings of his prudent forethought. To him eating was an affair of the first consequence; he never joined a party, either of business or pleasure, without first reducing it to a certainty that there would be no starvation attending it; and it was almost as affecting as a last dying speech to hear him relate the

melancholy story of the ruin of a brace of the finest woodducks he ever saw, by the "d——d stupid folly" of his cook, who roasted them in a pot instead of before the fire. The good Ariel had spread his stores on a snow-white tablecloth of ample dimensions, laid upon the rich greensward beneath a canopy of vines, that clambered over the tops of a clump of sassafras, whose aromatic buds sent forth a grateful fragrance. Here he marshalled his forces with great discretion, placing the lads and lasses alternately around the rural repast, and enjoining upon the former the strictest attention to his nearest neighbour. As to himself, he could never sit still where there was room for action. He curvetted around the little circle like a merry spaniel; cracked his jokes, and laughed only the louder when nobody joined him; helped himself, and ate and talked, all at the same time, with a zest, an hilarity, and honest frankness that communicated themselves to all about him, infecting them with a contagious merriment. The birds chirped over their heads, the flowers grew beneath their feet, the mild summer breezes played upon their cheeks, hope glowed in their hearts, and youth and health were their handmaids; why then should they not laugh and be merry?

But a plague on Nature! she is a female, after all, and there is no trusting her. As thus they sat unheeding all but themselves and the present moment, Nature had been at work unnoticed by the little crew, gathering into one great mass a pack of dark rolling clouds along the western horizon. The banks of the little isle were, as we said before, fringed all around by trees and shrubbery, and tangled vines, that quite hid the opposite shores, making it a little world within itself. The dark tempest gathering in

the west had therefore escaped the notice of the party, until the moment when a burst of merriment was interrupted by a flash of lightning, and a quick, sharp crash of thunder. When the Creator speaks, all nature is silent; and if, as some suppose, the leaping lightning is the quick glancing of his angry eye, the thunder the threatening of his voice, no wonder if every sound is hushed when they break forth from the pitchy darkness of the heavens. The laugh ceased; the birds became silent in their leafy bowers; the trees stilled their sweet whisperings; the insects chirped no longer, and the river murmured no more. There was a dead pause in the air, the earth, and the waters, save when the Creator of them all spoke from the depths of his vast obscurity.

The merry-makers looked at each other in silence, and in silence sat, until Ariel ventured to clear his voice with "a-hem!" which, to say the truth, lacked much of its wonted vigorous energy and clearness. Sybrandt gained a position whence he could overlook the island barrier, and came back running to announce that a thunderstorm was coming on rapidly—so rapidly that it would be impossible to cross the river and gain the nearest house in time to escape its fury. The damsels looked at the young men, and the young men looked at the damsels. One had on her best hat, another a new shawl, a third her holyday chintz gown, and each and all wore some favourite piece of finery, which, though peradventure Dolly the cook and Betty the chambermaid would scorn to wear, even on week-days, in this age of rapid unparalleled improvement, was still dear to their simple, innocent affections. The boys too, as they were called, and still are called among the old lords of the land, had on their Sunday gear, which, as they never ran in

debt to the tailor, it behooved them to nurse with special care. What was to be done in this sore dilemma ; for now the quick, keen flashes, the equally keen crashes that came with them, and the dead, dull calm that intervened, announced that the rain and the tempest were nigh.

Ariel was as busy as an assistant-alderman at a fire, and about as useful. Being a man who was always in a hurry when there was no occasion, it may be naturally supposed, that when there was occasion he would be in such a great hurry that his resolves would tread upon one another's heels, or impede their operations by running athwart each other, and breaking their heads. And so, indeed, it happened ; he was ten times more busy than when he had nothing to do ; swore at the lads for not doing something ; suggested a hundred impracticable things ; and concluded, good man ! by wishing with all his soul they were safe housed in the old mansion.

Catalina had been brought up at the boarding-school in the fear of thunder. The schoolmistress, indeed, always encouraged the young ladies by precept not to be frightened ; but she never failed to disappear in a thunderstorm, and was one time discovered between two featherbeds almost smothered to death. It is to be regretted that this natural and proper feeling of awe which accompanies the sublime phenomena of nature should degenerate into abject fear or irrational superstition. Divested of these, the approach of a thunderstorm is calculated to waken the mind to the most lofty associations with the great Being who charges and discharges this vast artillery, and to exalt the imagination into the highest regions of lofty contemplation. But fear is an abject, soul-subduing sentiment, which monopolizes the

mind, debases the physical man, and shuts out every feeling allied to genuine piety and faith.

Suddenly an idea struck Sybrandt, which was instantly adopted and put into execution. The boat, a broad, flat skiff, was drawn up the bank, and placed bottom upwards, with one side supported by sticks, and the other reclining on the ground towards the west, so that the rain might run off in that direction. The few minutes which intervened between this operation and the bursting of the torrent of rain were employed by the young men in covering the open spaces about the sides of the boat with grass and branches, as well as the time would admit. There was only space enough under this shelter for the young women, though Ariel managed to find himself a place among them. He was in the main a good-natured, kind-hearted man, but he did not like being out in a storm any more than his neighbours. The young men stood cowering under a canopy of thick vines, which shaded the boat and a little space besides. It was observed that Sybrandt placed himself nearest that end of the boat under which Catalina was sheltered, and that he was particular in the disposition of the grass and branches in that quarter.

A few, a very few minutes of dead silence on the part of our little group intervened before the tempest sent forth its hoards of wind and rain, smiting the groaning trees, and deluging the thirsty earth till it could drink no more, but voided the surplus into the swelling stream, that began anon to rise and roar in angry violence. This storm was for a long time traditionary for its terrible violence; and for more than half a century people talked of the incessant flashes of the lightning, the stunning and harsh violence of the thunder, the deluge of rain, the hurricane

which accompanied it, the lofty trees that were either split with lightning or torn up by the roots by the wind, and the damage done by the sudden swelling of the river on that remarkable day.

The party which found shelter under the boat fared indifferently well ; but the others were in a few moments wet to the skin. The little flexible willows bent down to let the storm pass over them ; but the sturdy elms and plane-trees stood stiff to the blast that wrung their arms from their bodies, and scattered them in the air like straws and feathers. The rushing winds, the roaring of the troubled waters, were mingled with incessant flashings of lightning, accompanied by those quick, sharp explosions of thunder that proclaim the near approach of the electric power. At length the little party was roused by a peal that seemed to have rent the vault of heaven, and beheld with terror and dismay a vast plane-tree, within a hundred yards' distance, directly in front of them, shivered from top to bottom like a reed. The explosion for a moment stilled the tempest of rain, during which interval the vast discovered trunk stood trembling and nodding, like one suddenly struck by the hand of death. Another moment, and the winds resumed their empire, the stout monarch of the isle fell to the ground with a tremendous crash, and the force of Omnipotence was demonstrated in the instantaneous destruction of a work which long ages had brought to maturity.

The young women screamed, and the youths shuddered, as they beheld this huge giant of nature yielding in an instant to a mightier power. But soon they were drawn off to the contemplation of a new danger. It is well known how sudden, nay, almost instantaneous, is the swelling of our rivers, especially near their sources, and where they traverse a hilly or mountainous region. The little isle where our scene

is laid was but a few feet above the ordinary level of the stream, and its surface as flat as the stream itself, which now began to dash its waves beyond the usual barrier, until at length the situation of the little party became extremely critical. The land had become less safe than the waters, and immediate measures were taken to prepare for the inundation, by turning the boat upon her bottom again. The party was arranged on the benches to the best advantage, and the young men stood prepared to ply the oars the moment the boat was floated off. Soon the tremendous torrent rolled over the surface of the whole island in one mighty mass of dark waters, speckled with white foam; and the boat was carried down the stream with the swiftness of an arrow. The difficulty was to escape the trees and bushes, which still reared their heads above the waters, since it was obvious that nothing could preserve the boat but her being kept from the slightest interruption in her course. The great object, therefore, was to avoid every obstacle, and to keep her head directly down the stream, till they met with some little nook or cove, where the current was less violent. In times of danger the master spirit instinctively takes the lead, and the lesser ones instinctively yield obedience.

Ever since the coming of the storm Sybrandt had seemed a new being, animated by a newly-awakened soul. The excitement of the scene had by degrees caused him to forget his shyness; and now the presence of danger and the necessity of exertion roused into action those qualities which neither himself nor others were conscious he possessed. He who had trembled at the idea of being introduced into a drawing-room, and shrunk from the encounter of a smiling female eye, now stood erect in the composure of unawed manhood, with a steady hand and a steady eye, guiding the little skiff through roaring

whirlpools and angry currents, furiously conflicting with each other, almost as skilfully as a veteran Mississippi boatman. All else sat still in the numbness of irrepressible apprehension. Even the busy Ariel was motionless in his seat, and his active tongue silent as the grave. But neither human skill nor human courage could struggle any length of time with the power of the waters, every moment aggravated by new accessions. In turning a projecting point, round which the current whirled with increased impetuosity, the boat struck the edge of an old stump of a tree just beneath the surface, and was upset in a single instant. Fortunately for some, though, alas ! not for all, the current made a sudden inflexion immediately below the projecting point into a little shallow cove, where it subsided into repose. It was in making for this harbour that the boat unfortunately encountered the stump, which, as I stated, was not visible above the waters. It is with sorrowful emotions I record that the accident was fatal to two of the innocent girls and one of the young men, who sat in the bow of the boat, which unfortunately, as she overturned, sheered out into the stream, and launched them into the whole force of the current. They were carried away and their bodies found a day or two afterward many miles below. The others, with the exception of Catalina, were shot directly, and in an instant, by the sudden angle made by the current, into the little shallow, quiet cove, where they were all preserved. Catalina was not one of these. Less strong, and less inured to the sports and perils of rural life, she became insensible the moment the accident occurred, and would have quickly perished, had not Sybrandt swam into the edge of the turbulent whirlpool where she was floating, and brought her safely to the land.

Sadly the remnant of our little party returned to

their respective homes without their lost companions, and sadly they contrasted the beauty of the quiet genial morning, and the happy anticipations that beckoned them forward to sportful revelry, with the uproar of nature, and the gloomy shadows of the evening, which closed in darkness, sorrow, and death. The remembrance of this scene, and of the conduct of Sybrandt, not only before but during the storm, and in the hour of her extreme peril, was often afterward called to mind by Catalina, and not unfrequently checked her inclination to laugh sometimes, and sometimes to bedownright angry with her sheepish, awkward cousin.— I need not dwell upon the anxiety of the father and mother of our heroine, nor of the good Dennis, who, in the midst of his fears, could not help crying out against and sparing not this new-fangled custom of making parties for the island, though both tradition and history avouch that these sports were coeval with the commencement of our happy era of honest simplicity. Suffice it to say, that the good parents received their only child as one a second time bestowed upon them by the bounty of Heaven, and that they were full of gratitude to Sybrandt,—whose inspiration seemed now departed from him. The crisis that awakened his sleeping energies having passed away, his long-cherished habits again beset him; instead of expressing his joy at having been instrumental in preserving Catalina, and showing his sensibility to the parents' gratitude, he became embarrassed, silent, awkward, stultified—and finally vanished away no one knew whither. We must not omit to record that from this time forward the worthy Ariel attended the Dominie's sermons regularly twice every Sabbath; a custom he had never followed before, inasmuch as he had a most sovereign propensity to falling asleep and disturbing the congregation by snoring

CHAPTER V.

An Irruption of Boiled Lobsters.

It was many days before Catalina again saw master Sybrandt, who, sooth to say, shrunk from the usual consequences of a good deed, as skittishly as some worthies do from those of a bad one. Catalina said to the woman within her, "He is giving himself airs—he thinks I will send for him again—but he'll be very much mistaken this time—I hate such proud stupid people!" and she looked in the glass, and was right pleased at what she saw there. The reader must guess what it was, for I never betray a lady's secrets. When Sybrandt at last overcame his old enemy, and ventured into what to him was worse than the jaws of a hungry lion, Catalina, affronted at his long absence, under these particular circumstances, which seemed to indicate that he considered the saving of her life a matter of no sort of consequence, treated him with considerable disdain. Sybrandt, who could digest twenty folios of metaphysics easier than comprehend the mind of a woman, and who never dreamed that his absence or presence was noticed by any human being in the shape of a young female, became only the more proud, shy, embarrassed, and stupid at this reception. He thought to a certainty his cousin despised him, and he was one of those that never court favour where they expect contempt. Thus

they continued to misunderstand each other, and thus, it was probable, would they continue to the end of their lives.

Not long after the adventure of the island, an incident occurred which occasioned a great sensation, not only in the city of Albany, but for many miles around. This was the arrival of a regiment of British troops from New-York, in consequence of expected hostilities between France and England, whose wretched rivalry generally involved the four quarters of the globe in war and bloodshed. A large portion of the officers of this regiment were gay young men without families, and the belles and mothers of the belles in and about Albany, saw in the new comers a mark on which to exercise the influence of the charms of the one and the arts of the other. One of the most mortifying results of the colonial state is, that it invariably generates on the part of the colonists a habit if not a feeling of inferiority, and on the part of the parent state a haughty arrogant disregard of propriety and decorum when among them. The men of the United Colonies, with the exception of perhaps those of Virginia and South Carolina, did not, in the days of which we are speaking, assert that proud equality which they are now authorized to maintain wheresoever they go; and the women, especially those who aspired to the *bon-ton*—with sorrow and mortification we record it—by the eagerness with which they sought, and the unconcealed vanity with which they received the attentions of gentlemen from the old country, contributed most materially to the depression of their own countrymen as well as the exaltation of foreign adventurers. Nothing indeed contributes so much to the relative dignity and virtue of the two

sexes, as the estimation in which they hold each other. Where women are neglected by their countrymen, or where men are neglected by their countrywomen, in their admiration for strangers, the result will probably be the degradation of both in the eyes of each other and the estimation of those whose attentions they court. This silly habit of admiring foreign fashions, foreign countries, and foreigners, became so deeply implanted in the minds of the good provincials of the "Old Thirteen," that it still retains its influence in some degree, as may be perceived in the docility with which we are accustomed to give the preference to moderate talent in a stranger, over shining merit in a native; and to bow to the decisions of ignorant pretenders, the sole weight of whose opinions is derived from their passage across the ocean. Like wine which has made a voyage to China, opinions are held to be improved by a similar adventure; and folly becomes venerable when we can trace it to the reverend errors of declining age across the water. Hospitality ennobles a nation only when it springs from nobler motives than the silly vanity of entertaining people of more consequence than ourselves.

The colonel of the newly arrived regiment had attained that period of life when vanity and ambition take the place of love. He was gallant and well-born; he tacked honourable to his name, and that alone was sufficient to consecrate him in the eyes of the provincial ladies. He belonged to that race of beaux which has long been extinct as a species, although we now and then see some vestiges in the remains of an old wreck of a soldier, whose wit and vivacity have survived his very self, and still sparkle from the mere force of

long habit. His name was Sydenham; he was somewhat of a coxcomb, and his exterior was prepossessing, especially in a red coat and epaulettes. His courage was undoubted; his principles not at all doubtful, for he held the point of honour to consist in meeting the consequences of his actions, good or bad, without flinching. He did not want for a reasonable degree of scholarship, and was not ignorant of books; but his greatest acquisition consisted in a consummate knowledge of the world, a manner which enabled him to be particularly pleasing whenever he chose, and a pliability of principles which made it singularly easy for him to choose the path most agreeable for the time being. The rest of the officers were nearly all alike, as much so as so many boiled lobsters. They all wore red coats, and all thought themselves of a different species from the honest burghers, whose wine they condescended to drink, and whose wives and daughters they favoured with their attentions in proportion as the liquor was good, and the ladies handsome.

The mansion-house of the Vancours had ever been open to the footsteps of all respectable strangers, and especially to the military men who frequently sojourned there on their passage from New-York to the frontier posts and back again. They came and went as they pleased, and were received and entertained with an easy liberality, of which we see some remains still lingering in the Southern States, and making head against the silent inroads of heartless and selfish ostentation. Independently of the hospitality of the house, the situation of the elder Vancour as a public man, together with his extensive acquaintance with the interests of the colony, and his singular influence over the Indians, naturally made

his house the resort of the principal officers of the government, with whom his opinions always had great weight.

Be this as it may, we soon find the colonel and his officers as it were domesticated at the old mansion-house, riding the colonel's horses, feasting on his excellent fare, drinking his old wine, pronouncing him a decent sort of an old curmudgeon, and never quizzing the good gentleman but at their messes. Colonel Sydenham singled out Catalina, *quo ad hoc*, as the object of his devoirs; and the others found rural deities among the daughters of the Van Amburghs, the Van Outerstoups, the Volckmaars, and the Vervallens of the neighbourhood, who could talk English with their eyes, if not with their tongues. It was not then the fashion to pay any other than the most respectful attentions to married dames; and if it had been, there was something in the appearance, manners, and character of the good Madam Vancour, a staid and sober dignity and quiet self-possession, that gained even the respect of folly and impudence combined. One of the young officers of the regiment was complaining one day that he could not find any body to fall in love with. "Why don't you make love to Madam Vancour?" said another, jestingly. "Madam Vancour!" replied he; "I should as soon think of throwing a glass of wine in the face of the king!"

The arrival and sojourning of these gay sparks created a mighty sensation in that part of the country, and in a little time produced great innovations in the simple habits of the people. Independently of the general laxity of morals which is so often the natural consequence of the roving, uncertain life of a soldier, and his freedom from the restraints of home,

there is always, attached to every considerable body of troops a train of vicious and worthless people of both sexes. Corruption follows in the rear of arms; and it is pretty certain that nothing makes more fearful inroads upon the moral virtues of the people than the association for any length of time with disciplined troops. One would suppose that the proverbial uncertainty of a soldier's life would generate habits of sobriety, reflection, and decorum; but so far from this, it is sufficiently evident that it produces quite a contrary effect. There is no period in which we see such careless, high-wrought, and high-seasoned conviviality as in an army the night preceding a battle, in which every man is to peril his life to the uttermost.

The rural deities of the shades, and the lazy river-gods, who slept in quiet in their crystal basins, save when the breaking up of the ice in spring or the swelling of the river in the pelting storm disturbed their repose, were anon astounded at the frolicsome racket of these new comers. Heretofore not a dog dared bark after eight o'clock in their quiet retreats, except as a signal that the wild man or the wild beast was coming. But now, "preserve us!" as the good Dominie Stettinius exclaimed with lifted hands,— "half the night was spent—yea, even to nine and ten o'clock—in dancings and jinketings." The cows stood lowing in the sober twilight, in expectation of the dilatory milkmaid, who was peradventure adorning herself, as the victim was erst dressed in flowers, to be sacrificed to some gross heathen divinity, whose attributes were lust and sensuality. The sober Dutch lads, who whilom considered the dissipation of a Christmas sleighride the summit of delight, now were wont to steal at midnight from the dormitory where the watchful cares of the good father had seen

them "quietly inurned," to waste their time and health, and morals, and spend their money in revels, that the sun saw and blushed at when he rose above the golden tops of the eastern hills. The stout intrenchments behind which our Dutch ancestors in other quarters so strongly and obstinately maintained their manners and habits, almost down to the present time, were gradually sapped or stormed, and the good Dominie Stettinius stood aghast to behold the back-sliding propensities of the youths and maidens of his hitherto docile flock.

He forthwith took arms to oppose this mighty invasion of his hitherto peaceful domain—I mean such arms alone as comported with his age, his habits, and his sacred function. Casting aside the chastened zeal with which he had hitherto maintained and enforced obedience among his quiet, simple hearers, he arrayed himself in the mighty words of reprehension, threatening, and denunciation; learned, eloquent, and virtuous, he poured forth the stores of his intellect and the enthusiasm of his soul in strains of rich and affecting simplicity, that would have done honour to the primitive reformers. But, alas! what can the tongues of angels do, when example, temptation, and opportunity knock at the threshold of the human heart, peep in at the windows, and whisper their seductions through the very keyholes? Some, doubtless,—and especially the more aged people, whose passions reposed upon the memory of the past,—were checked by the pious eloquence of the good dominie in their downhill career; but the young, the thoughtless, and the madcap boys and girls, many, very many of them long lived to rue the day that saw the regiment of red-coats pitch its white, innocent-looking tents among the rich meadows of the matchless Hudson.

CHAPTER VI.

A Beau of the Old Regime.

COLONEL SYDENHAM was a veteran beau of the old school, which, after all, I think was not a little superior to the present standard of dandyism. There was a courtesy, a polish, a high-souled deference to the ladies, which, whether originating in vanity or a nobler feeling, was still the source of many agreeable qualifications, and formed a charming ingredient in social intercourse. The little stiffnesses and formalities which accompanied this style of manners, were certainly preferable to the careless, and abrupt familiarity, or boorish neglect which a preposterous deference to fashion has since consecrated as high breeding and gentlemanly ease. The colonel had served in India, which was a fortunate circumstance, as it enabled him to ascribe his gray hairs, and the evident debility of his person, to the effects of a climate which, as he frequently observed, seldom failed to produce an appearance of premature old age. "I was gray at twenty," said the colonel, who would never use spectacles, or carry a walking stick on any occasion, though never man stood in greater need of both these useful auxiliaries. He was always deeply smitten with some youthful belle or other, whose attentions he delighted to monopolize, more from the gratification of an habitual vanity, than from a warmer and nobler sentiment. On the whole, however, he was a singularly agreeable man; and in spite of his age, always made a figure, and

was welcomed in the society of both sexes. He was soon in special favour with high and low, rich and poor, young and old, with the single exception of the staid Dominie Stettinius, who penetrated his easiness of principles, and was not inclined to consider good manners an equivalent for good morals.

The colonel early singled out Catalina as the object of his attentions. She was the fairest lady of the land in which he sojourned; she was unquestionably at the head of the beaumonde; and she was a great heiress in prospective, for she was the only child of a man who owned land enough to entitle him to vote at a German Diet. "If it should happen in the chapter of accidents," thought the colonel, "that this wood dove were to be softened by my cooing, she will be worth marrying—if not, there will be no harm done. I am too much of a traveller to pine at the wilful vagaries of a woman's heart." Accordingly he entered the field as Catalina's devoted servant; and as the strict rules of military etiquette forbade all interference with the commanding officer, the dapper majors, captains, lieutenants, and ensigns, always kept aloof while the colonel was making the agreeable to the young lady.

That the young lady was not pleased and flattered with the distinction of being the belle of the first military man in the neighbourhood, who wore a red coat, and tacked honourable to his name, is what we will not say, for it might not be true. It would have been out of nature to be insensible to such honours; honours to which the gentle sex are prone to bow down, because they are restricted from gaining any other laurels than those which they pluck from the brow of man. Their vanity and ambition can only be gratified by leading in chains the conquerors of

timidity, so closely veil their feelings, that while their very hearts are bursting, they exhibit to the careless eye nothing but stupid insensibility, or insufferable pride. Such was this unhappy young man, of whom at this period, it was doubtful whether he would ever be known and properly appreciated, even by the friend of his heart, or the wife of his bosom ; for he seemed destined never to be blessed with either.

Though he kept as much as possible away from the mansion-house, there were times when his wayward temper carried him there almost in spite of himself, or when the blustering, peremptory gayety of Ariel would force him from his moody solitudes into the pleasant social circle that was almost always to be found at Mr. Vancour's. One night a little party had collected there, consisting of the gallant Colonel Sydenham, two or three of his officers, the noisy Ariel, and the daughters of half a score of the most substantial burghers of Albany. A furious thunderstorm had come on in the early part of the evening, and it was settled that the whole party should remain all night where they were, to the great delight of Uncle Ariel, whose soul expanded with indescribable satisfaction at the thought of a merry party and a social supper. These, or something like them, were the only stimulants that could keep the good soul awake after the fowls had gone to roost. The colonel happened to be describing a dish of boiled fowl and rice common in the East Indies, which struck Ariel's fancy wonderfully. He disappeared shortly afterward, and continued to pass in and out of the room occasionally, without being particularly noticed by anybody, for he never could be quiet when any thing was going forward about the house.

"Sybrandt," said Madam Vancour, with the good-natured intention of rousing him from the chaos of stupidity in which he had remained bewildered for a long time,—“Sybrandt, pray come and assist us in finding out what this means.” They had gathered about the table, where was a number of books, into which some were looking, while others were talking about various matters.

“’Tis Greek,” said one.

“’Tis Hebrew,” said another.

“’Tis High-Dutch,” said a third.

“’Tis Mohawk,” said a fourth, and each one had a different opinion.

“Let me see,” cried Ariel, who just at the moment entered with a face as red as fire. He pulled out his specs, rubbed them carefully, placed them across his little snub of a nose; and planting himself in his usual determined position, with his short, sturdy drumsticks extended almost at right angles, began to pore over the mystery. He could make nothing of it.

“Colonel,” cried he to Sydenham, who had rather affected to be deeply engaged with Catalina,—“Colonel, here, d—n it, you understand Hindoo, and all that sort of thing; interpret for us.”

The rest joined in the entreaty, and the book being handed to the colonel, he proceeded with great gravity to study it upside down.

“Why, d—n it, Colonel,” shouted Ariel, “you’re holding the book upside down. Here, take my spectacles; I see your eyes begin to fail you as well as mine.”

The colonel would rather have marched up to a loaded cannon, or stopped a red-hot ball, than use spectacles in the presence of any living soul but his

valet, in whose discretion he placed unbounded reliance. In his solicitude to remedy the blunder so unceremoniously proclaimed by Ariel, he unluckily placed the cover of the book towards him, while he rejected the spectacles with a smile and a bow, both indicating he had no occasion for them.

"Why, d—n it, Colonel," shouted Ariel again, and breaking into an explosion of laughter; "why, zounds, you've got the book with the back side towards you this time. I insist on your taking my spectacles—I'm sure they will suit you exactly—you and I are just about of an age." And he continued to press the colonel to accept of them, till the good gentleman could hardly command his faithful auxiliaries, the smile and the bow. It was, however, a maxim with him, from which he had never swerved for more than a score of years, never to show either anger or mortification in company. He contented himself with quietly handing the book to Sybrandt, saying he must acknowledge his ignorance of the passage, which, by-the-way, he had not been able to distinguish, from the failure of his eyes. But this was a secret he kept to himself, preferring rather to be thought ignorant than blind. The whole company gave him credit for affecting to be unable to see merely to disguise his not being able to interpret the passage, which, as Sybrandt announced, was nothing more than an English proverb, printed in Greek characters, as we have seen practised, in the way of a grave quiz, in some of the old specimens of printing. There were few or no blue-stockings in those days we are now describing; but in no age of the world, and no class of mankind, was it ever the case that learning and knowledge did not attract respect. They are independent of the changing

fashions of place and time,—so intrinsically useful and respectable as to maintain their dignity at all periods, and among all classes of people; since it is impossible for the mind not to feel the obligation of being made wiser than it was before. This little incident raised Sybrandt in the scale of comparison with the colonel, especially in the estimation of Catalina, who inherited from her mother that decent respect for useful acquirements, which is one of the best evidences of good sense.

The colonel's spirits seemed to flag not a little after the adventure of the book, while those of poor Sybrandt gained a corresponding elevation; for it is the characteristic of such sensitive beings as he, to be about as unreasonably inflated as they are unreasonably mortified by trifles which to others seem perfectly insignificant. A pause in the storm without, and the conversation within, was interrupted by the loud sound of voices in the direction of the kitchen, a detached building about fifty yards in the rear of the house, with which it was connected by a covered way. The voices seemed to be engaged in hot contention; and presently Ariel came bounding into the room—his face in a blaze—exclaiming, "The old woolly-headed fool!—she knows no more about cooking than a Mohawk Indian." The whole company expressed anxiety to know the cause of this violent irruption; and Ariel accordingly proceeded to explain.

CHAPTER VII.

An Invasion of State Rights.

THERE reigned in the kitchen of Mr. Vaneour an African queen, whose authority, by virtue of long and vigorous assertion, was paramount to that of the mistress of the establishment and all other persons. Her complexion was of the highest order of perfection, according to the standard of Guinea; for nothing in the human shape or divine, not even the personification of Madam Night, was so irresistibly black as the skin of Aunt Nauntje, as she was called by the family, young and old. She was the mother of three generations of blacks—I beg pardon—of people of colour—who all appertained to the establishment. The boys at the time of their birth were given to some one of the young white members of the family, to whom they continued especially attached all their lives; and the girls were in like manner considered the property of the young ladies, who attended strictly to their conduct, and taught them to be useful, as well as virtuous. They were all treated kindly, and as a part of the family; and there was something in the connexion of mutual services, mutual good will, and mutual protection, thus established, that made the relation of master and slave, in those simple, honest times, one of the most endearing and respectable of all those which subsist between man and man. The slaves did not study

metaphysics, nor stultify themselves with dissertations on the relative claims of the two rival colours of the present day ; but they were far more happy, virtuous, and useful both to themselves and society, than the wretched victims of a rash and miscalculating philanthropy we see every day at the police and the quarter-sessions. Their labours were not more heavy than those of the owners of themselves and of the soil which they cultivated ; they worked in the same fields, or at the same employments ; and when they had given to their master the fruits of their youth and manhood, they found at his kitchen fireside a refuge for the evening of their days. They neither spent it in the poor-house nor the penitentiary.

It was gratifying in those days to see the interest which these old and faithful retainers took in the affairs of their master, and the manner in which they as it were identified their own characters and consequence with his. The master and mistress were not afraid to go a journey, and leave the house in charge of one of these ; for they knew it would be even more carefully attended to than if they were at home. These poor people did not then, as they do now, consider themselves in the light of a wronged and injured race, whose right, nay, whose duty, it was to resist, to run away, to defraud, to rob, or to murder their masters, if it were necessary, in the pursuit of freedom. The idea of a separation of interests between them and their owners never entered their heads ; and if it had, their hearts would have rejected the suggestion. But to return to our narrative.

Aunt Nauntje was despotic in that region which among the enlightened of the present day is con-

sidered as the terrestrial paradise, in so far as it pours forth the choicest of the blessings of this life. Need I mention that I mean the kitchen? Where she acquired her art I know not, but tradition says that the dishes she concocted had a rich and triumphant relish, a rare *je ne sais quoi*, which tickled the palate mightily, and seduced the worthy Ariel into occasional imprudent feats of the trencher. Nay, we record on the same venerable authority, that William Burnett, his Britannic majesty's governor, captain-general, and *locum tenens* in the province of New-York, being on a visit to the mansion-house, did incontinently luxuriate so lustily in the delights of a certain nondescript dish, the art of making which is lost in these degenerate days, that he fell asleep before the dessert.

The active Ariel, among his other accomplishments, such as grafting apple-trees, bleeding horses, and ringing pigs' noses, was an amateur in the noble art of cookery. He never could keep out of the kitchen when there was a feast in preparation; and many is the time Aunt Nauntje did violently expel him, by dint of flourishing the gridiron, the toasting-fork, or some such formidable weapon. Indeed, something like a feud raged between them, ever since Ariel had denounced her publicly, as "a stupid old fool of a Guinea nigger," for having committed the enormity of roasting wild pigeons without any stuffing.

When Ariel heard Colonel Sydenham describe the famous East India dish of boiled chickens and rice, which he did with a commendable minuteness, he pricked up his ears, and thought to himself he would go and make interest with Aunt Nauntje to surprise the colonel with a fac-simile. Accordingly, as I

have before noted, he disappeared as soon as the colonel had finished his detail, and sallied forth for the empire of queen Nauntje, who was busily engaged in cooking a jolly, old-fashioned meal, for a company of healthy, hearty folks, who had dined at one o'clock, and could therefore afford to eat supper. The inroad was by no means agreeable to her majesty, but respect for the brother of her good master always kept her within bounds, except on the spur of some immediate cause of irritation.

"Aunt Nauntje, my good soul," said Ariel, "I want you to try your hand at a famous dish I have just heard of from Colonel Sydenham."

"Ah," said Nauntje, "Massa *Auriel* always some crinkum-crankum in he head, 'bout new dishes. Well, what is he?"

"Why, a dish of boiled fowl and rice, dressed with curry. You know the colonel gaye you a bottle the other day."

Nauntje began to spit. "Curry—eh!—stuff just fit for a hog or an Indian."

"Well, but you know, Nauntje," said Ariel, coaxingly. "You know, d—n it, you are not obliged to eat it. Now do, my dear soul, try, for the sake of the colonel, will you?"

"Colonel, ah!—wish him a hundred miles off, wid all he crew of red coats; eat massa out of house an hum bum-by."

"Well, but your mistress will be pleased with it—come now, you clever old soul, and the next time I go to Albany, I'll bring you a new pipe, a paper of tobacco, and a row of pins."

To please her mistress, and get the reward promised by Ariel, Aunt Nauntje at length consented to try her skill at the outlandish dish, and Ariel was

delighted beyond measure. He was in and out of the kitchen every five minutes, giving directions and finding fault, until it was with great difficulty she refrained from having resort to the gridiron or the toasting-fork. As it was, she almost broiled with indignation at this attempt to overrule and insult her in her own proper dominion. At length the great attempt was nearly brought to a crisis, and Ariel solicited and obtained permission to taste the eminent concoction. But what pen can depict his indignation, when he discovered that in spite of all his cautions and injunctions Aunt Nauntje, who had a passion for onions, had poisoned the whole affair by a most powerful predominating infusion of that ungentle vegetable production. Ariel was confounded, thunderstruck, and indignant. He ejected the villainous compound into the fire, exclaiming—

“I’ll be shot if the stupid old fool hasn’t put onions in it!”

Whereupon Aunt Nauntje forgot the new pipe, the paper of tobacco, and the row of pins. She seized the mortal gridiron, pursued Ariel with a speed which seemed almost supernatural when contrasted with her appearance of extreme old age, and drove him, as we have before related, triumphantly before her into the parlour; at the door of which she stopped for a moment brandishing the gridiron, and then retired grumbling to her strong-hold again. It is due to the reputation and the memory of Aunt Nauntje to state, that the dish was brought up with the rest of the supper, and pronounced by the colonel to be equal to any thing of the kind he had ever tasted in India; by which righteous decision he for ever established himself in the good graces of that high-seasoned and high-seasoning divinity. The supper went off gayly, in spite of the discomfiture of uncle

Ariel, who soon recovered his good-humour, for he was not one of those impracticable churls who quarrel with the good things of this life and retain their anger at the same time they are gratifying their appetites. He threw out broad hints concerning the colonel and Catalina, every now and then favouring that young lady with a significant wink or ahem!—worried poor Sybrandt out of the little self-possession he had been able to collect together, by recollecting every thing the youth wished to be forgotten; shouted, laughed, and finally talked himself fast asleep in the old high-backed, well-stuffed chair, which with its fellows had been heirlooms in the family for almost a century. The worthy Dominie Stettinius was heart-struck the next day, when he learned that the party had prolonged its sober revels until the clock actually struck the half-hour between eleven and the very witching time of midnight.

A little incident, apparently of no consequence, which occurred this evening had a material, nay, a controlling, influence on the future life of Sybrandt Westbrook. As the party separated for the night the gallant colonel besought Catalina to bestow on him a little bunch of violets she wore in her bosom. In the gayety of her heart, or perhaps influenced by that little mischievous imp, demon, or godhead who is for ever found nestling in woman's heart, she bestowed the violets on Sydenham, with a most gracious and seducing smile, wishing him at the same time "pleasant dreams." The gift, the smile, and the wish were each one a dagger of ice planted in the bosom of Sybrandt, poisoning his rest and agonizing his feelings. The wakeful tortures of that livelong night gave birth to a fixed determination, which he carried into execution without delay.

CHAPTER VIII.

Our Hero, for the first time in his life, comes to a determination

THE life of jealousy, mortification, and self-reproach he had led almost ever since the return of Catalina from the boarding school gradually undermined the natural strength and vigour of Sybrandt's intellect, and produced that alternation of pride, anger, and self-reproach which is the parent of a thousand inconsistencies. The resolution taken under the dominion of pride or anger is abandoned under that of self-reproach; and thus the life of such a being is little else than a series of offences and atonements. No permanent resolution can ever result from such a state of mind. Tossed about in the tempest of conflicting passions, the unhappy man remains a vessel without rudder or pilot, until finally some one acquires the mastery, and a settled determination is indicated by a sudden air of quiet and repose.

It was thus with Sybrandt. The little incident of the violets put an end to the struggle which he had sustained for some months past, and his resolution was irrevocably taken. In the days of which we are speaking, the young men bordering on the frontiers were accustomed almost universally to commence the business of this world with a trading voyage among the savages of the borders. Previous to assuming the port and character of manhood, it was considered an almost indispensable obligation to

undertake and complete some enterprise of this kind, replete with privations and dangers. The youth went out a boy and returned a man, qualified to take his place among men, and to aspire to the possession of the object of his early love. It was in this way that the character of the patriarchs of this country was formed; and by these means that it exhibited a union of homely simplicity, manly frankness, and daring enterprise, which at length found their reward in the achievement and possession of liberty.

Without consulting any human being, the morning after the supper we have just recorded, he abruptly requested of Mr. Dennis Vancour the permission and the means to make an adventure among the Indians of the north-west. Mr. Dennis was not astonished, for he was a genuine Dutchman; but he was much surprised at this application.

"Why, hang it, boy," said the good man, "what is the use of it? You know you will have enough when I am gone—and while I live you can want nothing. You had better stay at home and study with the Dominie."

"But I cannot study now—I"—and here Sybrandt faltered and was silent.

"What, you are tired boy, hey? well, I don't much wonder at it. I always had a great respect for learning, but somehow or other I could never get over the awe with which it inspired me; I always kept at a distance from it. But are you determined? won't you flinch, boy, when it comes to the point?"

"Never fear me, uncle,"—and he clenched his fingers involuntarily,—“never fear me!”

"Well, then, you shall have what you ask of me. I like thy spirit, boy. It was so I began life, and so

shall you. Forty years ago I took a canoe and fifty dollars' worth of goods, and old Tjerck, then but a lad; and away I went right into the woods, where at that time, I believe, no white man had ever been before me, and returned alive. The Indians were not such good hands at making bargains as they are now, and I returned with five hundred dollars' worth of furs. I repeated the like every year, increasing my capital each voyage, until I grew rich for the times. I might have been happy, too, perhaps," continued the old man, "but I must needs go to New-York, where I fell in company with the king's officers, and what was worse, fell in love with your mother—spent my fortune—ruined my hopes—was first fool and then misanthrope—returned to my father's house a disappointed prodigal—inherited a portion of my father's estate, and finally found in the son an object for that love which the mother had rejected."

Mr. Dennis Vancour had never been equally communicative with Sybrandt before. Perhaps the idea of parting with the boy of his adoption had opened his heart, and for a moment overcome his long habit of silence.

"But who shall go with you?" resumed the good man, after a pause, which each had employed in calling up recollections of the same dear object. "I have it—old Tjerck is the very man."

"I am afraid he is too old, sir."

"Not he—not he, boy—he is as tough as hickory—he'll tire you out, and starve you out, any time, I warrant you. Besides, he speaks the Mohawk language." So it was settled that old Tjerck should be the squire of our new errand of the woods and wilds.

A few days sufficed for preparations for this toilsome

and perilous voyage and journey. As many Indian goods as could be conveniently stowed in a light bark canoe, a small quantity of provisions, two rifles, or perhaps muskets, with the necessary ammunition, and two stout hearts constituted the outfit for this wayfaring in the wilderness. My readers, if they belong to the "better sort," will think this but a paddling affair for the hero of a story; but let them recollect that it was a dangerous enterprise, and that courage and daring ennoble every honest undertaking.

From the moment Sybrandt formed the resolution, and commenced the preparations aforesaid, he seemed to be a new man. He had something to do, and something to suffer worthy of a man. He had action, enterprise, excitement, to call his attention from his own selfish and petty vexations, and now he walked erect with spirit in his step, determination in his eye. In short, he presented an example of the indissoluble union between the man and his purposes. The one is fashioned by the other; and nothing is more certain than the contamination of eternal trifling. All this time he went not near Catalina; and it was only when thinking of her—which he did pretty often—that he relapsed into his old habitual inconsistencies, and felt himself, as it were, becalmed between too conflicting objects. He certainly had a great curiosity to know what she said or thought of his going away; wondered whether she would not regret his absence; and secretly tried to persuade himself that she would understand—what he had taken all possible pains to keep from her—his motives for acting as he did. He thought to himself, that if she would only pine away a little in his absence, he would forgive her on his return. At one

time he determined to depart without seeing her; at another he determined to take leave of her with the most sovereign indifference; and finally, he came to no determination at all. In this state he was found by Ariel, who was highly out of humour at having had nothing to do in the equipment of Sybrandt. It was the first pie that had been made in the neighbourhood for many a year, in which he had not had a finger.

"D—I take it," quoth he, "why didn't you ask my advice; why, I would have shown you how to paddle your canoe—to cook venison without salt—sleep with your mouth shut, to keep out the gnats and mosquitoes—and shoot an Indian. But it's too late now; I've a great mind to go with you on purpose, only I've promised the officers to show them how to ring pigs' noses." So saying, he dragged him away half-willing, half-reluctant, to the mansion-house.

When Catalina heard of the contemplated adventure of our hero, she mused in silence on the subject for hours, without being able to decide whether to be angry or sorry. She never dreamed that her own conduct had influenced his determination, and therefore ascribed his omission to apprise her of what was going forward to neglect and indifference. Under this impression she determined to treat him accordingly; to meet him if he came at all without any appearance of surprise or regret at his sudden resolution. She received him without expressing either, or betraying a single spark of curiosity or solicitude about the length of his stay or the course of his voyage. She even jested on the subject, begged him to exercise his scholarship on teaching the Indians Greek and Latin; and stung him to the

very soul, by observing, with as pretty a sneer as ever enthroned itself on the lip of beauty, "that his sojourning among the savages could not fail of having the most favourable influence on their manners."

The interview became exceedingly painful to Sybrandt. He would have given the world to be out of the room, yet was riveted to the spot by that mysterious fascination which awkwardness and pride and sensibility exercise over the power of motion. He sat chained to his chair, by the withering spell of mortified pride and despised affection. At last, however, with a desperate effort, he arose and muttered his farewell. At that moment Catalina remembered that she owed her life to him, and that he was going whence he might never return.

"Sybrandt," said she, in a voice which these recollections had softened into kindness, "what shall I give you to remember me by in the woods?" After a moment's pause, she drew from her pocket,—we beg our fashionable readers to bear in mind, that this was almost a hundred years ago,—she drew from her pocket a golden coin—we believe it was a Dutch ducat—and continued, with a tone and look of saddened vivacity, "Take this: you can make a hole in it, and tie it round your neck as a talisman against Indian witchcraft. Farewell, cousin Sybrandt, and remember—that—that Dominie Stettinius will regret your absence." Sybrandt took the piece of gold, but he could not say "farewell" for the soul of him. He thanked her, however, with a look so full of meaning and sensibility, that she remembered and wondered at it a long time afterward. Sybrandt made a hole in the ducat, and tying it with a riband, wore it from that moment next his heart.

CHAPTER IX.

The Wilderness.

EARLY next morning, ere the tints of the bright morning reddened the eastern sky, or the birds had left their perches among the clustering foliage, all things being ready, Sybrandt launched his light canoe on the smooth mirror of the Hudson, and assisted by the dusky Charon, old Tjerck, paddled away upward, towards the sources of that majestic river. The first day they occasionally saw, along its low, luxuriant borders, some scattered indications of the footsteps of the white man, and heard amid the high, towering forests at a distance in the uplands, the axe of the first settler, the crash of the falling tree, the barking of the deep-mouthed hound, and the report of a solitary, distant gun, repeated over and over by the echoes, never perhaps awakened thus before. A rude hut, the first essay towards improvement upon the Indian wigwam, appeared here and there at far intervals along the shores, the image of desertion and desolation, but teeming with life and living souls. As they passed along, the little half-clothed, white-haired urchins poured forth by dozens, gazing and shouting at the passing strangers. Gradually these evidences of the progress of that roving, adventurous race, which is sending forth its travellers, its merchants, its scholars, its warriors, and its missionaries,

armed with the sword and the Bible, into every region of the peopled earth, ceased altogether. Nature displayed herself naked before them, and the innocent earth exhibited her beauties in all the careless, unstudied simplicity of our first parents, ere the sense of guilt taught them to blush and be ashamed. There was silence on the earth, on the waters, and in the air, save when the voice of nature spoke in the whirlwind, the thunder, and the raging of the river when the full-charged clouds poured their deluge into its placid bosom.

Night, which in the crowded haunts of men is the season of silence and repose, was here far more noisy than the day. It was then that the prowling freebooters of the woods issued from their recesses to seek their prey and hymn their shrill or growling vespers to the changeful moon or the everlasting stars, those silent witnesses of what mortals wish to hide. As they toiled upward in the moonlight evenings against the current, which every day became more rapid in approaching towards the falls, they were hailed from the shore at intervals by the howl of the wolves, the growling of the bears, and the cold, cheerless quaverings of the solitary screech-owl. When, tired with the labours of the day, they drew their canoe to the shore and lay by for the night, their only safety was in lighting a fire and keeping it burning all the time. This simple expedient furnishes the only security against the ferocious hunger of these midnight marauders, who never approach within a certain distance, where they stand and howl, and glare with their eyes, a mark for the woodman, who takes his never-failing aim directly between these two balls of living fire.

But the labours of our hero's voyage were far

greater than the dangers. He and his trusty squire had to breast the swift waters from morning until night, and win every foot of their way by skill and exertion combined. Sometimes the current swept through a long, narrow reach, between ledges of rocks that crowded it into increasing depth and velocity,—at others it wound its devious way by sudden, abrupt turnings, bristling on every side with sharp projections either just above or just below the surface; and at others they were obliged to unlade their light canoe, and carry its lading fairly round some impassable obstruction. In this manner they proceeded, winning their way inch by inch—watching with an attention, an anxiety never to be relaxed for a moment without the danger, nay, the certainty, of the shipwreck of their frail canoe, the loss of their cargo, and the disgrace of an unsuccessful voyage. This last was what every young man feared beyond all the dangers and privations of his enterprise. It was a death-blow to his reputation, as well as his future prospects; for not a rural damsel would condescend to waste a smile upon a youthful admirer who had failed in his first adventure. The two qualities most valued among these good people were courage and prudence; and it argued a want of both of these, when he lost his boat and his cargo, or stopped short of a good market among the men of the woods.

At length, after enduring what would demolish a regiment of well-dressed dandies in these degenerate times, on the fourth day, towards evening, they were warned by a distant, dull, monotonous, heavy sound of their approach to the falls of Fort Edward, as they were then called—at that time a frontier post.

"Hark! massa Sybrandt," said T'jerck, as he paused from plying his ceaseless paddle: "hark! I hear him."

"Hear what?" replied the other.

"The falls, massa. Maybe we find some Indians dare to trade wid."

Sybrandt listened and could plainly distinguish the leaden plunge of the river gradually becoming more distinct as the canoe made its way up the stream, which now began to whirl about in boiling eddies, each crowned in its centre with a cap of snow-white foam. Turning a projecting point, they met the full force of the current; which, spite of all their efforts, jerked the bow of the light canoe completely round, and shot her, like an arrow from a bow, out into the middle of the river. Finding it impossible to proceed any farther in this way, they landed and commenced the laborious task of unlading and carrying their merchandise and canoe round the falls to meet the placid current above. While thus occupied, they encountered a party of Mohawks, who had come thither to fish, headed by a chief called Paskingoe, or the one-eyed. He was a tall, athletic savage, six feet high, of a ferocious appearance and indifferent character. He had lost an eye in some drunken brawl; and having mixed a good deal with the white men, exhibited the usual effects of such an intercourse, in a combination of the vices of both races. Cunning, avacious, and revengeful, he still had sufficient mastery over his feelings to disguise them when occasion required, except under the influence of intoxication; then his bad passions became ungovernable, and his rage without discrimination or control. It was said he had killed his own son in one of

these bloody paroxysms, under pretence that he was undermining his influence with the tribe. He was sitting with his party of four Indians besides himself under the shade of a clump of pines that nodded over the foaming torrent, when Sybrandt and Tjerck, suddenly and unexpectedly to themselves, came full upon them. The Indians had seen them coming up the river afar off, with a keenness of vision they possess perhaps beyond even the animals of the forest.

"Welcome, brother," said the chief to Sybrandt.

"Ah! Paskingoe, how you do?" said Tjerck, who had known him before. "I no tink to see you here; and I no glad nudder," added he aside to himself.

There was little ceremony practised in these interviews between the traders and the Indians. Sybrandt inquired for furs, and the chief asked what he had to exchange for them. Finding that Sybrandt had brought with him two or three kegs of that poison which has swept away the race of the red men, and seems almost on the eve of doing the same to the whites, Paskingoe became very earnest with him to go to the junction of the Hudson with the Sacondaga, where he said he had plenty of people who would exchange commodities with him.

Tjerck shook his head, and Sybrandt paused.

"What, is my brother afraid?" said Paskingoe. "Is not the Mohawk the friend of the white man? Men that are afraid should stay at home with their wives," added he contemptuously.

"I am not afraid; but"—

"Huh!" said Paskingoe; "when I go to the fort, I will tell them I met a white man who dared not go to the Sacondaga, because he heard an old

owl screech;" alluding to the shrugs and motions of old Tjerck. "My brother will get no beavers unless he goes to Sacondaga. He will go home as he came, and the young women will laugh at him."

Sybrandt thought of Catalina, and determined to go with the chief. The Indians assisted him in carrying his canoe and merchandise round the portages at Fort Edward and Glens Falls; and though they cast many a longing look at the kegs of rum, throwing out many shrewd hints at the same time, they neither stole nor took any of it by violence. At length, after a toilsome voyage, they reached the junction of the two rivers, where neither was a hundred yards wide. The mighty Hudson was here a little pastoral stream, giving no promise of his majestic after-course, or of the riches he was destined to bear in future times upon his broad bosom. Near the place of their uniting there were vast tracts of low and wild meadows without trees, coursed by the devious windings of the various branches of the Sacondaga, which at that time abounded with the finest trout. It was a wild, solitary region, entirely out of the usual route of travellers, who either followed the course of the Mohawk river, or left the Hudson at Fort Edward, and struck across the high hills to the end of Lake George in their way to Canada. The nearest settlement was at Johnstown, towards the south, where Sir William Johnson resided, and exercised that sway over the tribes of Indians far and near which still remains, and will remain for ever, a subject of admiration and wonder.

There were neither Indians nor beaver-skins at the station, as promised by Paskingoe, who, by closely examining the grass, ascertained, as he said, that the party had gone away a day or two before

towards the fishing-house. This was a small lodge built on a little rocky elevation, just on the edge of the vast meadows, and at the head of one of the branches of the Sacondaga, by Sir William Johnson, who sometimes came there from Johnstown to hunt and fish. Paskingoe assured Sybrandt he would find them not far from the lodge, which, being unoccupied great part of the time, the Indians occasionally slept in when the weather was bad. If any idea of danger crossed the mind of Sybrandt, it was coupled with the conviction that if Paskingoe had any bad designs he could execute them just as well where he was as at the place where he wished him to go. He therefore consented to accompany him, notwithstanding all the eloquence of old Tjerck, who, by signs and looks, attempted to dissuade him. Accordingly, early the next morning, they embarked on the sluggish Sacondaga, the Indians in their canoe, and Sybrandt with his trusty squire in his, and paddled their way along the devious windings of the lazy solitary stream, that seemed a vast serpent asleep in the high grass that skirted its banks. After proceeding some miles they became, as it were, lost in the pathless monotony of the vast meadows, which presented in the hazy obscurity of a cloudy day no distinct outline or boundary. The silence all around them was as the silence of a winter's night, when the wind is hushed to a freezing calm, save that the dipping of the paddles, at measured intervals, was heard, and scarcely heard, like the clicking of the death-watch when all else is still. Sometimes at rare intervals a solitary heron would raise his long neck above the grass along the stream, and make a strange discordant noise, which was echoed by the Indians in mockery; but otherwise it was a dead

pause of nature ; the world of sound was still, and the world of sight presented nothing but a landscape of drear melancholy sameness, a sky of one dim unvarying shade of motionless clouds.

Sybrandt felt his solitary situation, which became gradually more disagreeable from his seeing, or imagining he saw, certain looks of equivocal meaning pass between Paskingoe and his Indians. On one occasion, turning suddenly round, he observed the one-eyed chief shake his head in answer to an inquiring look of one of his companions, and point in the direction where, peering above the dead level of the meadow, stood the little rustic fishing-house. Towards evening they approached the head of the navigation of the stream, close by which stood the building. For some time before, the dull flashes of the lightning, followed at lazy intervals by the distant chit-chat thunders, rumbling and muttering, had indicated the approach of a storm. Gradually the Indians plied their paddles at quicker and quicker intervals, and so did Sybrandt and his squire, in order to keep pace with them. At length, just as they arrived at a little rude landing-place, where Sir William Johnson launched his canoe when going on a fishing-match, the distant waving of the pine forest, which here bordered in majestic gloom and grandeur on the edge of the wide meadow, and the pattering drops of rain, announced that the crisis was approaching rapidly. There was only time for Sybrandt to cover his merchandise carefully, ere it came in torrents on the wings of a wind that laid flat the rank high grass, and made the forest groan. The party, both Sybrandt, Tjerck, and the Indians, made the best of their way to the fishing-house, the door of which was opened without ceremony, there being no one in it, and no furniture requiring a guard.

CHAPTER X.

A Night Scene.

FOR some time there was a dead silence among the party. Paskingoe was moody, and Sybrandt, seeing no traces of the Indians he expected to meet at this spot, from time to time eyed him with looks of suspicion. He could not help believing his designs were at least questionable, nor disguise from himself that he was entirely at the mercy of the Indians.

"My brother thinks I have two tongues and two faces," said the one-eyed chief at last, in a sarcastic tone.

Sybrandt made no answer.

"The white man," continued Paskingoe, raising his voice, "does not know what to say; he is afraid to speak out. If I tell him the Indians and the beavers will come to-morrow, he will not believe me. Why should I lie to him? Is he not a muskrat caught in a trap?"

Sybrandt felt it was true; he was completely in the power of the Indian. Hardly knowing what to say he continued silent. The evening was now setting in, and the storm continued. The wind roared among the pines, the lightning flashed almost incessantly through the windows, accompanied by loud, angry peals of thunder, and now and then the crash of a fallen tree gave token of a triumph of the angry elements. The uproar without was strongly contrasted with the

silence within. Paskingoe sat in moody silence smoking his pipe; Sybrandt was occupied in no very pleasing reflections on his awkward situation; and old Tjerck, from long experience of the Indian character, saw that mischief was at work in the breast of the one-eyed chief.

"Is not the white man and the black-white man hungry?" at length he said. "Has he any thing good in his canoe? Let him send for it, and we will eat together."

Sybrandt had no disinclination to this proposal, and Tjerck was despatched with one of the Indians to bring in some provisions from the canoe. While they were gone the one-eye ordered his people to kindle a fire, which they did with some difficulty, and the room at length became illuminated with the red glare of the pine knots that hissed in the chimney. In a little while Tjerck and the Indian returned, bringing the provisions which our voyagers had laid in, together with two guns which had been left in the canoe. The eye of Paskingoe flashed fire.

"Is the white man afraid of the bears and wolves to-night?"

"I brought 'em for fear he get wet," said old Tjerck. As the one-eye placed his blind side towards them, Tjerck dexterously handed Sybrandt a knife which he had concealed under his homespun linen frock, and which the young man as dexterously hid in his bosom. The meal being now prepared, they sat down to partake of it. After finishing, the one-eye asked Sybrandt—

"Has the white man any fire-water in his canoe?"

"I have," replied Sybrandt.

After a pause of some minutes, the chief asked—

"Is it good?"

"It is."

Another pause ensued, which was again interrupted by the chief.

"Has it never been to the spring? Our people have been poisoned by the white man mixing too much cold water with the fire-water."

"It is very good," answered Sybrandt; and another pause ensued.

"When the white man comes among us," said the chief, "we offer the best we have. We don't hide away our corn, and give him the husk. That is what you white men call nigger."

"No more nigger dan yourself?" muttered old Tjerck.

"Some drink would be very good," said One-eye. "I am dry."

Tjerck politely handed him a horn-cup of water, which he dashed on the floor, while his countenance began to exhibit keen anger and impatience.

"If the white man won't give, will he sell? The Great Manitou has promised me some fire-water to-night. I dreamed so last night."

"You dream almost equal to Sir William Johnson," replied Sybrandt, smiling. Paskingoe shook his head.

"No, no," said he, "Sir William out-dreams me. He dreamed away my best hunting-grounds; but I only dreamed away his red coat. But will the white man trade for some fire-water?"

Sybrandt felt the peculiar delicacy of his situation, thus buried alone in the depths of the wild solitudes of the Sacondaga. He knew the danger of declining, as well as complying with the wishes of Paskingoe. To refuse entirely would be to provoke his violence; to give him a moderate portion of spirits would pro-

bably only render him more eager for more, and to afford the means of intoxication would be only the prelude to violence and murder. During these reflections, the anger and impatience of the whole party became so evident, that he at length determined, as the best alternative, to gratify them with a small portion, in the remote hope that they would be satisfied. He accordingly sent Tjerck for a bottle which he had laid aside to treat the old man now and then. Tjerck shook his head, and obeyed with manifest unwillingness.

"It is good," said One-eye, as he took a deep draught, and handed it to the savage next him. "It is good, but the water is very shallow; the Indian sees the bottom too easily." And indeed, by the time it had gone round the bottle was empty. Sufficient had, however, been swallowed to waken the sleeping demon that every drop of liquor conjures up in the heart of an Indian. As it mounted into their brains they became clamorous for more, and Sybrandt saw that his life would fall a sacrifice to refusing any longer. Accordingly a small keg was brought from the canoe, and the Indians set in for a complete savage debauch. In a little time their howlings and shoutings almost overpowered the uproar of the elements without, and their uncontrolled and uncontrollable animal spirits found vent in grimaces, boastings, and antics of mingled ferocity and buffoonery. Their eyeballs glared, they danced, and sung, and flourished their tomahawks and scalping-knives over the head of Sybrandt, who stood in a corner, his right hand in his bosom grasping his knife, in momentary expectation that that deep and never-dying hatred the Indian cherishes for the white man would precipitate them into some act of violence against him. He

kept his eye steadily and fearlessly upon Paskingoe, who was now half-mad, recounting, with violent gesticulations, and tones of crack-brained, ferocious triumph, the number of white men he had butchered, of their wives and children he had scalped, of their homes he had burned. He told how he had gone alone by himself to a town of the Hurons, which he entered at midnight, and murdered every soul in one of the wigwams, after which he retired without leaving any traces into the woods, and secreted himself. The next night he came again, and murdered the people of another wigwam, retiring as before into the woods without being seen. The third night he was watched, and pursued before he could achieve his last triumph. But he related, amid the yelling triumphs of his companions, how he escaped from his enemies, and brought home with him twenty-seven of their scalps.

"What white man could do this?" cried he, darting his eye of malignant fire upon Sybrandt; "What white man would dare do this, even if his limbs were not like those of a woman? The white man is a coward and a liar; he cheats us of our lands, and builds forts upon them, from behind which he shoots us down like dogs. He thinks he is our master, and that we are his black niggers, who have nothing we can call our own." Then brandishing his tomahawk, and dancing, and whirling himself round, yelling at the same time in concert with his companions, he again went on:—"The white man cannot stand before the Indian unless there is two to one. I know it—I—Paskingoe—I know it. At Cataraqui I buried this tomahawk in the skulls of two of the cowards who were running away like deer. At Hoshelega I drank the blood of three bragging deer; it

was pale and cold like that of a fish. At the great water of Ontario I tore out their hearts, and every where I go, I drag their scalps smoking from their quivering brains, and spit upon them, and grind them under the soles of my feet. They could never look me in the face, and so the cowards tried to escape the fire of my eyes by putting them out. But they shall know me better with one eye than they did with two. Ten scalps have paid for one of my eyes, and ten more shall be paid before I sleep with my fathers."

Gradually excited by the liquor and the stories of these bloody exploits, the Indians and their chief became raving mad. They quarrelled and struck at each other with their knives, and thirsted for blood with the instinct of beasts of prey maddened by lust or hunger. At length the One-eye shouted—

"Are we fools? Blood must be shed to-night, but not the blood of the Indian. The Great Spirit has sent the white man here to atone for the wrongs of his people. Let him die!"

"Let us drink his blood!"—"Let us scorch his brain with red-hot coals!"—"Let us tear out his heart!" echoed the yelling fiends, as they brandished their weapons and came towards Sybrandt with foaming mouths and eyes darting fire. At this moment the soul of the young man bowed to the supremacy of these accumulating horrors; but it sunk only for a moment, and regained its level again. There was no chance of retreat, and the very hopelessness of escape nerved him to a cool and wary exertion of his means of defence. He grasped his secret knife, and looked round for his trusty Tjerck, whose dusky form he saw at the moment vanishing out of one of the windows on the opposite side of the room. Thus

left alone, he braced himself for what might follow. The Indians, with all their hardihood and daring, are chary of their lives; although when it comes to the point, no people of the earth die so coolly. But the point of honour is to achieve their object with as little loss as possible. They therefore advanced warily upon Sybrandt, who stood as warily on the defence. They approached—their knives and tomahawks were raised to strike, and he was just about to spring upon the one-eyed chief, when a loud, long war-whoop was heard apparently close under the window, quavering amid the pauses of the storm.

"Hush! 'tis the war-cry of the Adirondocks," said Paskingoe.

The Indians suspended their purpose, and listened with breathless anxiety. Nothing was heard but the falling rain, the roaring of the forest, and the rattling thunder.

"The Adirondocks dare not come here; they are women," said the One-eye, contemptuously. Again they resumed their bloody purpose, and again the shrill war-whoop sounded amid the uproar without, and checked them for a moment. Sybrandt thought of retreating; but the single door was barred by the Indians, who stood for a few minutes expecting an attack from without.

"Let us die like warriors," said Paskingoe, and took another drink. His example was followed by the others, and the renewed draught added fury to their mad, malignant passions.

"The white man is a traitor," they cried. "He has brought the Adirondocks upon us;" and the One-eye aimed a blow with his tomahawk that Sybrandt could not parry. He warded it from his head, but it fell on his left arm, and disabled it

entirely. In dealing this blow, however, Paskingoe, being somewhat unsteady with the liquor he had drank, stumbled forward, and met the weapon of Sybrandt, which entered his bosom. He fell upon the floor, and the rage of his party became still more intense. They yelled like tortured fiends; and, notwithstanding the cool determination of our hero, a few moments must have decided his fate, when, just at the instant that death hovered over him—at the very crisis when their tomahawks and knives were about to let out his life-blood—the door of the fishing-house was violently burst open, and a tall, majestic white man in a hunting dress rushed into the room, followed by half a dozen people. The arms of the Indians, the moment they saw him, were arrested, and their weapons remained suspended above their heads.

CHAPTER XI.

A Woodman.

THE stranger addressed a few words in the Mohawk language to the stiffened warriors, with an air of indescribable authority. They lowered their weapons, and retired to the other extremity of the room, to which he had waved them with his hand. He then advanced towards Sybrandt, now become weak with the loss of blood, and courteously asked an explanation of the scene, which the young man briefly gave. The stranger shook his head, and exclaimed, in a desponding tone,

"Rum—rum—rum! the shame of the white man; the ruin of the red. What can I do with these wretched people, when my own do all they can to undo what I have devoted my life to accomplish."

Then observing that Sybrandt leaned against the wall, and was gradually sinking in his height, he asked, anxiously,

"Are you hurt, sir?"

"I believe I am, sir. I feel no pain, but my left arm seems getting useless;" and overcome by weakness he sunk down upon the body of Paskin-goe. The master passion of the dying Indian for a moment animated his waning strength. He grasped his knife between his feeble fingers, and raising his arm, unnoticed in the obscurity of the

dark corner, struck a delirious random blow with the last expiring energy of despair. The knife remained sticking upright in the floor, and the Indian chief died with the effort.

"Who is that?" cried the stranger.

"Paskingoe," muttered one of his party; "the chief who gave you his lands, and whom you called brother. . . Revenge him."

The stranger made no answer, but proceeded to examine into the situation of Sybrandt, who had fainted with loss of blood. He gave a key to one of his attendants, who descended into the cellar, in the wall of which was a secret recess where were kept a variety of articles necessary to the various privations and accidents incident to travelling or sojourning far from the haunts of men and the conveniences of civilized life. The stranger applied what was proper of these to the case of Sybrandt, who in a short time recovered from his swoon, and was accommodated with a mattress from the receptacle above mentioned. Having seen to all this, the stranger turned to the Indians of Paskingoe's party, who were standing in sullen silence, and demanded the occasion of this fray.

"The white man can tell you. He will make a good story out of it. Ask him," said one of them.

"Very well," replied the stranger, "Take the body of your chief away to his people, that they may bury him. The storm is over. Go; and when you have done this, come to me. I will see justice done. Go, now, and take care what you do. Take care!"

The Mohawks placed the body of their chief on a rude litter made of the sticks which had been gathered to light the fire, and departed with mourn-

ful steps, chanting the monotonous death-song, which gradually died away in the distance till it was heard no more. The stranger then having ascertained that Sybrandt was in a deep, exhausted sleep, directed all to be kept quiet, and carelessly throwing himself upon the floor, with his cheek supported on his hand, soon fell into a quiet repose, which was shared by all his companions, with the exception of one, who was directed to watch the slumbers of Sybrandt.

The morning dawned bright, clear, and refreshing, finding all safe and well but our hero, whose ailment, however, was nothing but weakness. He would have risen with the rest, but his head grew dizzy, and he obeyed the injunctions of the stranger to remain quiet for that day at least.

"We will pursue the amusement of hunting, the object which in fact brought us here so opportunely, and it will go hard but you shall have some venison for dinner. I would promise you trout too, but the streams are too much swelled for fishing. Remain quiet with your old servant, whom I have instructed what to do, and to-morrow my people shall carry you to my home on a litter of green boughs, which is better than all the sedan-chairs." So saying, he shook hands with Sybrandt, and departed, observing, "You have no fever, I see."

When they were left alone, Tjerck expressed an honest, heartfelt pleasure at the miraculous escape of his young master. "I did all I could for young massa," said he.

"Yes, you ran away," said Sybrandt, who felt not a little indignant at his desertion.

"Aha ! massa," said Tjerck, "who you tink make dat great war-whoop dat stop de rascal One-eye two, tree minute, and save your life, hey ?"

"I don't know ; the Adirondocks, I suppose."

"Old nigger !" cried Tjerck, with uncontrollable self-complacency, and laughing with all his might ; "old nigger make it."

Sybrandt saw the whole plan, and thanked Tjerck for the prompt diversion he made in his favour, which, by giving time for the coming of the stranger, undoubtedly saved his life. He then gradually died away into the slumber of weakness, while his black guardian angel sat and watched him with the stillness of a dead calm in the wilderness.

His repose was long and deep, and he awoke refreshed and hungry. The stranger and his party returned from their hunt with plenty of game, and Sybrandt was allowed to partake sparingly of the meal which was prepared. He had now leisure to contemplate the person to whom he owed his rescue from the drunken ferocity of the One-eye and his party. He was apparently about forty years of age, with a form of the largest and most lofty proportions, a deep ruddy, yet bronzed complexion, and a countenance of a most singular combination of expression. It united those indescribable yet indelible characteristics which seem inseparable from a cultivated intellect, with the careless, fearless daring of one whose life had been passed in the midst of dangers and the enjoyment of unlimited sway. His deportment, while it was easy and courteous to all, betrayed a careless superiority, which both the Indians and white men seemed tacitly to acknowledge, obeying implicitly every word he uttered, every motion of his hand, and every glance of his eye. His manner and mode of expressing himself sufficiently indicated that he had sat at good men's feasts and been where bells had tolled to church, at the same time that they were totally distinct from those

of the gentlemen Sybrandt had seen at the house of his uncle. His motions exhibited the ease, facility, and unembarrassed vigour of an Indian, and there was a singular force, brevity, and richness in his phraseology that partook somewhat of the Indian manner of expression. He wore a hunting dress equally partaking in the modes of savage and civilized man, and indeed altogether exhibited a singular confusion of the peculiarities of the two races. His deportment towards Sybrandt was kind, at the same time that his attentions were rather indifferent than very particular. He took upon himself the direction of our hero, his merchandise, and affairs, without consulting or seeming to think it worth while to consult him.

"To-morrow, at sunrise," said he, "we shall set out for home. My people will carry you and your baggage. The canoe must be left where it is." Then turning to his people, "Rest, and be ready by break of day."

In a few minutes all was quiet, though, with the exception of Sybrandt, the floor was their bed, and their pillow a knapsack, a log, or perchance a stone. In the dawn of the morning they set forth in a direction nearly southwest, through a forest of pines, beeches, and maples, such as nature produces but once on the same soil, by the exertion of her unimpaired, youthful energies. The solemn pines, straight as an arrow, and without a single limb below a height of a hundred feet, seeming already shaped for the masts of some mighty man-of-war, stood side by side, at distances leaving sufficient space unencumbered by underwood for the travellers to pass without difficulty. But when, as it sometimes happened, their course lay through a rich, juicy bottom land, a new creation sprung up before them of beeches, maples, and

majestic plane trees, spreading and interlocking their arms, and forming an impenetrable shade, only to be visited by the bright rays of the winter sun when the leaves fall and the branches are bare. Beneath their damp and gloomy reign sprung up a lesser race of nature's progeny, consisting of shrubs, and vines, and plants of every various name, mingling and matting together, and forming a succession of obstacles which only the strength, skill, and perseverance of a woodman might overcome.

The litter of boughs in which Sybrandt was placed was carried alternately by the followers of the stranger, and certainly a more easy mode of conveyance was never devised for an invalid. Rude, and silent, and monotonous as was the forest through which their journey lay, it was not devoid of gayety or incident. Sometimes the keen eye of one of the party would detect a black squirrel looking down from the topmost branches of one of these towering pines, and barking, as it were, in derision. The leader would then propose some little prize for bringing it down with a single bullet, and without drawing blood. A halt would then be made for the purpose of disputing the prize. None but a woodman could even distinguish these little animals among the dark foliage of the lofty pines, clinging close to the limb, and almost incorporating themselves with the rough bark. Each took his turn, and the object was to strike the bark of the tree with the ball directly where it came in contact with the body of the squirrel, by which he would be stunned, and fall to the ground without any external wound. Few were capable of this feat on the first trial, and loud were the shouts that echoed through the forest at the successive abortive attempts. When each one had tried without

success, the leader would utter some little epithet of contempt, bid them stand aside, and never fail to bring the little animal down without breaking his skin. So, if they met with any difficulties in their march which the strength, skill, or intrepidity of the others could not surmount, he took the lead and labouring oar, and conquered every obstacle of nature by superior strength, management, or daring. It was by frequent instances of this sort that the mystery of his unbounded sway over his people was explained to Sybrandt. The human character can only be perfected and consummated by the union of superior knowledge and superior strength, directed and animated by a courage that dares all dangers, defies all obstacles.

At midday they halted in an open space for the purpose of rest and refreshment. "On this spot," said the stranger, carelessly, "on this spot, about fifteen years ago, was fought a bloody battle between the Hurons and the Mohawks. We were taken by surprise and suffered dreadfully; but—" and his eye kindled in triumph, "we, I and my Indians, made the cowards flee at last, and shot them down like deer. The name and the nation was extinguished on this spot at a single blow. History says nothing of this; but if a bedrid king or superannuated queen had died that day, it would have been carefully recorded. The causes which change the destinies of men and the face of the earth lie unseen and unnoticed, while little things and little men are carefully handed down to future times as mighty agents in the vast business of the universe. Such is history, and in fact tradition is no better. One conceals or overlooks the truth; the other tattles falsehoods." And he mused for a little time, as if applying these observations to his own past experience.

CHAPTER XII.

The Woodman's Home.

ON the evening of the second day they arrived at the residence of the stranger, a few miles from the banks of the Mohawk river. It was a little embryo settlement just struggling forth in the midst of the vast empire of nature, and composed of log cabins, the first remove from the bark huts of the Indians. "This is the capital of my kingdom," said the stranger; "it is a wide empire, not very populous; but never mind, the time will come." He welcomed Sybrandt to his house—a large square edifice of hewn pines, the interstices filled with mortar,—with that frank, careless hospitality characteristic of every thing he said and did, and presented him to his wife and children; the former an Indian woman, the latter an evident mixture of wild and tame, the perfect images of nature in her finest proportions.

Sybrandt remained at the house of the stranger some weeks ere he entirely recovered from the effects of his wound; and after his recovery, in truth, he was in no haste to go away. It was evident, too, that the stranger did not wish to part with him. "It is long," said he, "since I have had a companion who could talk with me on subjects connected with my early habits and associations."

Our hero could not refrain from expressing his surprise at seeing a person of his education and accomplishments thus voluntarily become an exile from

civilized society to mix with beings so different from himself.

"Why, I don't know," replied he, smiling; "I was tired of the labour of doing nothing. In my own country I was a gentleman, but a gentleman without fortune; and such a one, you know, cannot stoop to be active and useful except in certain professions. I was physically incapacitated for any sedentary profession, for there is about me an impatience of being still, a sort of instinctive longing for exercise, fresh air, and freedom of action, that make me a fitter companion for wild beasts and wild men than for lords and ladies. They might have made a soldier of me; but my family was Jacobite, and neither would we ask, nor the government grant me a commission. I might have gone into a foreign service; but the truth is, I had some qualms about one day or other perhaps being obliged either to fight against my own country, or desert the standard under which I had voluntarily enlisted. It happened that an intimate friend of mine was appointed governor of this province, and the thought struck me that I should have plenty of elbow-room in the new world, and plenty of exercise for my ungovernable propensity to activity in hunting deer, wrestling with bears, skirmishing with the Indians, and other rural amusements. I proposed to accompany him, and he accepted me as a companion, under the character of his private secretary. On our arrival in New-York he desired me to sit down and write an account of our voyage and safe arrival to the colonial secretary. Before I had half finished there was an alarm in the house that a bear had made his appearance in one of the markets, or perhaps, as I believe was the fact, in the only market in the city, which I suppose has grown

very much since. I threw down my pen, sallied forth in the crowd, and after a smart skirmish with Sir Bruin, actually killed him with my own hand.

"I was excessively proud of this exploit. 'I suppose you expect to be brevetted,' said his excellency, smiling. Then shaking his head, he added, 'I see you won't do, my good friend. You are cut out for a mighty hunter before the Lord, like honest Nimrod, and not for a secretary. Have you an inclination to go as resident minister among the Mohawks, and become the bear-leader, or, in more classic phrase, the Lycurgus of these wild Spartan warriors?'"

"He then explained to me, that the government had directed him to establish, if possible, an agency somewhere on the banks of the Mohawk, for the purpose of acquiring an influence over these warlike tribes, for whose good graces the governors of Canada and New-York had been for a long while contending.

"'What say you, my friend?' said he; 'I think you are the very man. You are about half Indian already; and if you can only make them half white men, you cannot but agree admirably!'"

"The idea caught my fancy wonderfully; and I accepted the offer without hesitation. You, who have lived so near the confines of the dominion of Nature, and mixed with her sons, need not be told the particulars of my coming here, the privations and dangers I encountered, and the obstacles I met and overcame. We shall talk over these some other day. I have already sat still here longer, I believe, than I have done at one time these ten years. So come, Westbrook, 'tis a fine day for a hunt; and you are well enough to join in it."

He then whistled his dogs, who came wagging their tails, as much delighted as their master—furnished Sybrandt with a gun, and his eldest son, a boy about ten years old, with another, and after making all necessary preparations, called his wife, an agreeable-looking Indian woman, with a voice as soft as a flute, and an eye like that of an antelope.

“Sakia!—She is an Algonquin,” said he to Sybrandt, “and her name translated into English is ‘love.’—Sakia, we shall return before night. See that you have something good ready for us.” Sakia went her way smiling and good-humoured as a child.

“She is my wife—my good and lawful wife—and the mother of all my children. I never had any other, and I never wish to have. You look as if you wanted to express your wonder that I have not brought a civilized European lady to share my solitude. But, in truth, what would such a one have done here but fret away her soul into vapours, and pine herself to death, and hang a dead weight upon me and my purposes. Not one in a million of the fine ladies I formerly associated with would have consented to accompany me in the wilderness; and if she had, ’tis a million to one she would have made herself as wretched as she would have made me. She could not hunt like me; and her lonely hours would have been imbibed by perpetual ennui or perpetual fears. Still less would an ignorant, vulgar white woman have suited me as a companion. The ignorance of the Indian is neither troublesome nor offensive, like that of civilized life; nor is it accompanied by that grossness of manner and clumsy carriage, characteristic of hard labour. An Indian woman is always graceful; and the sweetness of her

voice makes amends for all that is wanting in sentiment and expression—or rather it is both sentiment and expression combined. No, no, young man—if you ever come to live in the woods, marry a wood-nymph. You might as well bring a dancing-master here as a fine lady. But come; we are wasting time. Take care you don't mistake me for a wild animal, when we get into the woods, and shoot me.—Here, Will, do you go ahead, my boy; and if old Snacks don't behave herself, take a whip to her.—I give my boys the lead," said he, addressing Sybrandt, "whenever it can be done with safety. It makes them brave and manly."

Our party soon buried themselves in the pathless woods, and continued onward till they struck the banks of a little lake, whose waters were of crystal, and in whose bosom the surrounding verdant banks were reflected with a thousand new and nameless beauties, just as the imagination heightens and adorns the realities of nature.

"Let us sit down here awhile," said the stranger. "You seem tired. Or, if you like, you can stay here and fish, while Will and I skirt round the lake with our guns. I have brought fishing-tackle with me."

Sybrandt chose this alternative, being somewhat tired; and the stranger and his boy departed with the dogs, to make the tour of the lake, which seemed some half a dozen miles in circumference. "Lay your gun where you can reach it, in case a deer or a bear comes by," hallooed he from a distance, just as they vanished in the woods.

Influenced by the scene before him, which threw a charming quiet and repose over his whole soul, Sybrandt, instead of engaging in the sport of fishing,

continued to contemplate the unadorned, unsullied beauties of nature in this her wild, secluded paradise. The crystal waters lay sleeping within the green-fringed curtains of their waving banks, and not a sound, an echo, or a motion disturbed the deathlike quiet of the landscape. The world, as it presented itself at that moment to his eye, was composed of the sky above, the little lake and its green border beneath; all beyond was shut out from the view. The axe had never opened a vein in the bodies or limbs of the primeval forest, that giant progeny which exhibited the product of the first energies of mother earth; nor had her bosom ever, in this lonely region, been seared by the hand of man. Life itself seemed extinct, except in the beating of Sybrandt's pulses, and the myriads of little fish that sported in the transparent waters, and turned their silvery sides ever and anon to the bright beams of the god of day. Sybrandt little thought, at that moment, that a few years, a single generation would scarcely pass away, before this region of the dead, or rather of those who never had an existence, would spring, as if by magic, into life and animation; that its silence would pass away before the babbling tongues of all ages, and almost all countries; that languages and men would congregate within these now melancholy woods, that never met before in any spot of all the earth; and that the Promethean touch of courage, enterprise, activity, energy, and perseverance would here perform, in almost less than no time, the far-famed ancient miracle of animating the lifeless clod into motion and intelligence.

So thought not Sybrandt. He thought of the past and of the future, as they concerned himself.

and his own affairs. They became concentrated in his recollections and anticipations, his hopes and his fears, his sufferings and his enjoyments. That selfish loneliness which formed so large a portion of his habits and his character here came over him with renewed force, curdling and stagnating his feelings and sympathies, except as they referred to himself alone, and to his own exclusive objects and pursuits. With these Catalina was so intimately associated, that he never thought of himself without thinking of her. There was more than usual mortification and sadness connected with his present associations; for solitude is ever the nurse of melancholy musings, imaginary woes, and foreboding apprehensions. In connexion with Catalina, he recollected little from which he could derive any gratification, or on which memory could exercise its powers of exaggeration to any other purpose than to increase and give energy to his bitter impressions. On the contrary, every smile of ridicule, every real or fancied indication of her indifference, dislike, or contempt, arose one after another before him, like malignant spectres, pointing their skinny fingers, and grinning in supernatural scorn. His face became flushed, his heart beat, as one by one he recurred to the long item of imaginary neglects or insults he had endured, and again voluntarily inflicted upon himself the real mortifications they occasioned.

As he sat thus, as it were, eating his own soul, and banqueting on the bitter bread of wounded pride and sensibility, his fishing implements remained unnoticed at his side, and he neither heard the loud music of the hounds, nor the report of the stranger's gun, from time to time echoing through the woods.

His reveries were at length interrupted by the voice of the stranger, sounding cheerfully in his ear, and awakening him to a perception of reality. He came laden with a variety of game, and exclaimed, as he advanced,—

“Come, let us away home. I have plenty of game, and you, I dare say, plenty of fish. We shall have a glorious dinner, and glorious appetites. Let us see what you have caught.”

“Nothing,” said Sybrandt, colouring a little.

“Nothing! O, thou idle or unskilful piscator, what hast thou been doing?”

“Thinking,” said the youth, with a sigh.

“Thinking! what has a man to do with thought among the Indians and wild beasts? Action, boy, action is the word here in my empire of shade. Were I to spend my time in thinking, I and my little ones would starve. I have half a mind to give you no dinner to-day.”

“I have thought away my appetite already,” said the other, somewhat sadly. The stranger eyed him with a glance of keen inquiry.

“Young man,” said he, seriously, “you are a scholar; I have found out that already. But your education, I doubt, is not quite finished. I shall put you through an entire new course, and make a man of you, as well as a scholar. In a few weeks there will be a meeting of the Mohawks at my court. Until then you will have no opportunity to dispose of your merchandise to advantage; and I know well that an unsuccessful Indian trader can never rise among the frontier men, because he is supposed to want both courage, conduct, and perseverance. You must therefore stay with me till after my grand council, and I shall have time to turn

over a new leaf with you. You want action, and you shall have it. What say you?"

"My friends will be uneasy at my long absence."

"O, if that is all, I shall send a messenger to Albany in a few days, and he will carry a letter for you. So that objection is got over."

Nobody cares about seeing me, thought Sybrandt.

"What say you; is it a bargain?" said the stranger.

"It is," said the other; and the matter was decided. "And now for home. O how gloriously hungry I am!" and they hied them towards home with long and hasty strides.

The day was far spent when they arrived at the door of the stranger, and found every thing prepared for them as he had directed. His Indian wife received him with a smile of gladness, and the children flocked round to welcome him, and admire his game. There was little appearance of sentiment, but much good-humoured frankness in the meeting.

"Will you have a book to occupy the evening," said the stranger, when the night had set in. "I have books, but in truth I seldom read them now. They make one lazy and unfit for action. But I have no objection to your reading."

"I had rather hear you talk," said Sybrandt. Looking round and perceiving the Indian wife was absent on her domestic duties, he added, "May I inquire if you don't find your time hang heavy on your hands sometimes, for want of the society you have been accustomed to?"

"Why, no," replied the other; "I cannot say I do. I am never idle in body or mind. Both as a matter of necessity as well as amusement, I hunt almost every day, which gives me appetite, occupation, and

rest when I lie down at night. Besides this," added he, smiling, "I exercise dominion over men; I influence at least, if not direct, the affairs of an invisible people, as it were, hid in these woods; and this gives sufficient occupation to my mind. There is no study more interesting than man, and of all mankind the savage affords to me a subject of the greatest novelty and interest. It is curious to see how different, yet how much alike are the civilized and savage races of men. One is a bear-skin in its rough natural state, the other the same skin decked on the edges with red cloth and porcupine quills. The animal it covered is still nothing but a bear."

"You are no admirer of the animal, it seems, in either of its forms," replied Sybrandt.

"You are mistaken; I think him a decent sort of animal enough, and have no quarrel with my fellow-creatures, though I came hither to live in the woods that I might enjoy perpetual exercise without actual hard work, and perpetual excitement without ruining myself at the gaming-table, or ruining others for the purpose of keeping myself awake all day."

"Yet I should suppose you would sometimes feel lost for want of the ordinary intercourse of social life—the interchange of thought—nay, the conflict of opinions and interests, which keeps the world going on its axis round and round for ever and ever."

"I am not always alone; the Indians sometimes visit me; but to be sure they are no great talkers, except when they make a set speech, when, I assure you, they cut a most respectable figure as orators. But there is never any want of conflicting opinions and interests when the Indian and the white man come in contact. I fear they will never agree. I sometimes almost despair of being able to consum

mate the plan which has gradually opened itself to my mind during my residence here, and is now become the leading object of my life."

"May I ask what it is?" said Sybrandt.

"To bring the Indians into the circle of civilized life. I cannot but see that if they remain as they are, a distinct, discordant ingredient in that great frame of social life which is now spreading itself in every direction, and will one day, I believe, comprehend the whole of this vast continent, they must perish. Nothing can save them but conforming to the laws, and customs, and occupations of the whites. I have endeavoured to prepare them gradually for this, and for that purpose have endeavoured to gain their confidence, and establish an influence over them. I have succeeded to admiration, and beyond all other white men, with the exception, perhaps, of some of the Catholic missionaries. Yet the truth forces itself on me every moment of my life, and I cannot shut my eyes to it—this influence is founded not on my superiority in the qualifications of a civilized man, but on my capacity to excel even the Indians in war, in hunting, in fatigue, privations, and endurance of every kind. This is the secret of my power. In proportion as I become a savage the savages respect me—no more."

The stranger then proceeded to relate a variety of anecdotes illustrative of Indian habits and modes of thinking, all calculated to establish this opinion, and indicating that instinctive, insurmountable wildness of character which rendered and yet renders the labour of winning this race into the fold of civilization, so dear to humanity, an almost hopeless task, which even the ardour of faith and the zeal of philanthropy is sometimes tempted to abandon.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Kings of the Woods.

THE preceding conversation was interrupted by a slight tap at the door, which was straightway opened, and, to the no small dismay of Sybrandt, the party of Indians whose chief had fallen on his knife and died at the fishing-house, headed by a new chief, silently entered the room in which they were sitting. The stranger received them with courtesy, and motioned them to sit down. They obeyed, and remained without speaking, while they eyed Sybrandt with glances of keen malignant meaning.

"My children come as friends?" said the stranger.

"The red children still love their father," replied the chief; "but they come to tell him he has a snake in his wigwam which they must kill, and take out his teeth."

The stranger started, and turning aside to Sybrandt, said, "How unthinking I have been! I should not have detained you a moment here, after you were able to travel: but fear not; I am your security that not a hair of your head shall be touched while I carry mine on my shoulders." Then turning to the chief, he replied to him as follows:

"I understand thy meaning."

"'Tis well," said the other.

"To-morrow I shall inquire into this affair."

"The serpent must go with us to-night. I have promised the wife and mother of Paskingoe they

shall sing the song of joy to-morrow, at the rising of the sun. The Indian does not lie."

"He is my friend; he is under my protection."

"He cannot be the friend of our white father and the enemy of his red children."

"He killed Paskingoe in his own defence. Paskingoe and his people were mad!"

"Who made them so? The young serpent and his poison. He must go with us—we want him."

"He shall not go. I cannot give him up."

"Then you are no longer our father," replied the chief. "You have told us you were our friend, but it is only the white man's talk. He is never the red man's friend when the white man is a party."

"Stay till the morning," said the stranger, apparently greatly perplexed, "stay till the morning, and I promise you shall go away satisfied."

"It is good," said the chief, "we will stay. But will the young serpent stay too?"

"He will; he will not run away like a deer."

"It is good," said the Indian, and they lighted their pipes and continued to smoke for some time in silence.

This colloquy was carried on in the Mohawk tongue, but Sybrandt easily comprehended its object, and it may be supposed his feelings were by no means enviable. He remained perfectly passive, however, justly conceiving his interference would only produce additional irritation in the minds of the Indians.

At length they finished their pipes, and the chief said to the stranger, "Can we remain in our father's wigwam to-night?"

"Will the young white man be safe till to-morrow?"

"He will, unless he tries to run away."

The stranger made no reply, but led the way to an upper room, where the Indians laid themselves down on the floor, and soon slumbered in that profound quiet characteristic of their race.

An interesting discussion ensued between Sybrandt and the stranger, in which the latter proposed to aid his escape that night, by furnishing him with a guide and a horse, and detaining the Indians in the room where they were sleeping till he was far enough not to be overtaken.

"And what will be the consequence?" said Sybrandt; "the savages will never forgive you. They will become your enemies, and if they do not murder you, your wife, and children, you will lose your influence over them from this time. No, sir—the great plan you hope to accomplish shall not be ruined for my sake. I am determined to remain and meet what may come."

"Faith, you are a fine fellow—something more than a scholar, I see. Be it so. But I here pledge you my honour, no harm shall come to you but what I will share. Let us to bed, you are safe for to-night. The Indians never violate hospitality."

It may be supposed Sybrandt did not sleep very sweetly that night, though he apprehended no danger to his slumbers,—it was the morrow that he feared: and when the morrow came he rose early, and descended into the room they had occupied the night before. The stranger and the Indians were already there, the former dressed in a superb suit of British uniform, with glittering epaulettes on either shoulder. Round the room were displayed various articles most irresistible to the Indian fancy, and which they eyed with looks of eager longing, interrupted only for a moment by a glance of malignant meaning

at Sybrandt as he entered. After a pause of some minutes, the chief addressed the stranger as follows :

"My father, your son had a dream last night."

"Ay?" said the stranger, smiling, "what was it my son?"

"Your son," replied the chief, with great gravity, "your son dreamed that the Great Spirit appeared to him, and told him his good father had made him a present of his fine suit, and given each of his people six new blankets. Did the Great Spirit speak the truth? or will my father make him a liar?"

The stranger paused a moment. "The Great Spirit said true; the suit and the blankets shall be given. But, my son, I also had a dream last night. The Great White Spirit came to my bedside, and said in a whisper, Thy son, the chief of the Beaver tribe, has forgiven the young trader by whose hand Paskingoe fell. He has given him to thee to do with him what thou wilt. Did the Great White Spirit speak true?"

The chief looked at his companions, and they at him, in doubt and perplexity.

"I had forgotten," resumed the stranger; "the Great White Spirit said also, the mother of Paskingoe has dried up her tears, and his wife ceased her groans, ever since you gave them the beautiful beads and the necklaces of pinchbeck. Did he say true, or did the Great White Spirit lie?"

Again the Indians exchanged significant glances, and then uttered that guttural sound by which they are accustomed to signify their approbation.

"My father," at length said the chief, "you dream too hard for your son. But you have not made our Great Spirit lie, neither will I make yours. The young serpent is free; but let him take care how

he comes among us again. Even my father shall not dream him out of the fire."

The bargain was consummated ; the Indians departed with their finery, and Sybrandt was free. As they disappeared in the forest, old Tjerck, who had watched the result of the embassy with deep solicitude, quavered the war-whoop of the Adirondocks in triumph. An arrow from some unseen bow at the instant whizzed past his ear, and put a stop to his exultation. He however preserved the arrow all his life afterward, making it the text of a most excellent tale, which was as little like that we have just related as the description of most landscapes is to the original.

The stranger explained to Sybrandt the preceding colloquy, which had passed in the Mohawk language ; and our hero insisted upon repaying him the price of his liberty. But this he would by no means consent to, saying the loss was not his, as the government supplied the means of conciliating the Indians by such presents as might be necessary.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Stranger undertakes the reformation of our Hero.

SYBRANDT remained with the stranger, whose character and mode of life he admired more and more every day. Of the thousand little peevish trammels of civilized life, which, like the invisible ropes and pegs of the Lilliputians, keep the mighty Gulliver, man, bound to the earth, or, albeit, chained within a certain routine of prescriptive restraints, none were found in the establishment of the stranger but those of the simplest form. There was every thing necessary to the gratification of a wholesome appetite, sound sleep, and rural exercise. There were none of those fretting and factitious wants which, under the disguise of domestic comforts or embellishments, make human beings, that call themselves enlightened, the slaves of that wealth they acquire by the sacrifice of health, pleasure, and liberty. An air of happy freedom from restraint reigned every where around; and though every thing seemed to arrange itself into an easy regularity, it was without effort, without noise, and without the slightest appearance of coercion or authority. The Indian wife had always a smile on her face; the children, freed from the soul-harrowing, soul-subduing surveillance of eternal nursing and restraint; gambolled about, the happiest of all God's creatures, and spent those days which Nature has allotted as the period when her offspring shall be free from chains, in all the luxury of playful hilarity. In

short, Sybrandt could not help observing, that while there appeared to be no restraint, there was, at the same time, a perfect decorum, an unstudied decency, which answered all the ends of the most fashionable fastidiousness.

Every day when the weather permitted, and indeed often when a dandy sportsman would have shrunk from the war of the elements, they pursued the manly, exciting sport of hunting. The image of war, most especially in this empire of savages and beasts of prey—this course of life gradually awakened the sleeping energies of Sybrandt's nature, that had been so long dozing under the scholastic rubbish of the good Dominie Stettinius, of whose hapless fate he as yet remained ignorant. He acquired an active vigour of body, together with a quickness of perception and keen attention to what was passing before him, that by degrees encroached deeply on his habit of indolent abstraction. He caught from the stranger something of his fearless, independent carriage, lofty bearing, and impatience of idleness or inaction. In short, he acquired a confidence in himself, a self-possession, and self-respect, such as he had never felt before, and which freed him from the leaden fetters of that awkward restraint which had hitherto been the bane of his life. Still, however, the cure was not complete; the disease had been deep-seated, and occasional relapses indicated pretty clearly that a return to old scenes and modes of life would assuredly produce a return of the old infirmity.

One stormy day, when the wind blew such a gale as made it dangerous to pursue their daily sport, the stranger found Sybrandt buried in the confused rubbish of what is known among the

simple ones as a brown study, but which among the better sort is dignified with the more lofty epithet of abstraction.

"Westbrook," said he, with his usual brief frankness, "the time we have spent together, and the circumstances under which we met, ought to have made us friends by this time. It seems to me that you are getting homesick. If so, say so. You can leave me here as factor for your merchandise, and I pledge myself to render you a true account of the proceeds, the first good opportunity that occurs. How say you, am I right?"

Sybrandt was actually thinking of home, but not with that strange, inexplicable feeling which sickens us of a paradise, and makes us turn with tears of bitter longing to the barren sands or arid mountains consecrated to memory under that cherished name. He had but few, very few pleasurable recollections stored there, and these were buried under a thousand self-inflicted pangs of self-love and mortification. He replied to the stranger in a tone of bitter depression:

"I was, indeed, thinking of home; but I have no wish to go there just now."

"Were you not happy?"

"Not very."

"Whose fault was that?"

Sybrandt paused, and a few moments of rapid retrospection convinced him how difficult it was to answer this simple question.

"I don't know," at length he said; "sometimes I think my own, sometimes that of others."

"Westbrook," said the stranger, kindly, "did you ever hear the story of the king who was playing at tennis in the midst of his courtiers?"

"I don't recollect," replied he, somewhat surprised.

"Well, I will tell it you. A dispute arose about some point of the game the king was playing, on which a large bet depended. The king appealed to his courtiers. They were silent. At length one of his gray-headed ministers came into the tennis-court, and on hearing these doubts, 'Sire,' said he, 'you are wrong.' 'What,' said the king, 'do you pronounce me in the wrong without knowing any thing of the matter?' 'Pardon me, sire,' said the other, 'if you had been right, these gentlemen (turning to the courtiers) would not have doubted.' This story will apply to all the actions of man. His self-love and his passions are his courtiers, and whenever they are doubtful or silent as to the question of who is to blame, you may depend upon it he is decidedly wrong. If there was any room for doubt, his courtiers would not hesitate a moment to decide in his favour."

Strange as it may appear, Sybrandt had never viewed the matter in this light before, nor asked himself the question of who was to blame for the anguish of mind which, in truth, he had wilfully inflicted on himself. Dominie Stettinius was a good and a learned man, but no philosopher. He had never yet arrived at the conclusion, that learning and wisdom, although actually man and wife, were an arrant fashionable couple, and not always seen together.

"Come," said the stranger, after permitting him to cogitate a reasonable time on his story—"Come, I have a curiosity, no idle one, to know something more of a young man who I cannot but see is capable of acting, yet seems to be prone to think to no purpose. I have long since told you my story,

now tell me yours. I see your mind is diseased—sickly—out of tune. Let me know the nature of the disease, and my life on it, I cure you.”

“I believe I have nothing to tell. My story has no action; and without action even an epic poem is dull,” replied the youth, forcing a melancholy smile to his aid.

“Never mind; I entreat you to tell it. I think I comprehend the case from the very acknowledgment you have just made. Your history, as I suspect, wants action.”

Thus solicited, Sybrandt at length overcame his shyness, and gave the detail of his causeless miseries. As he went on, the stranger sometimes smiled, and at others shook his head. “Strange,” said he, at length, when the young man had concluded his singular confession, “strange that a man should pass his whole life in coining false miseries, which have no being except in his wayward imagination! Young man, I feel an interest in you. There is that about you which I love and respect, let me find it where I will. I have seen you twice placed in circumstances to try the nerves of the stoutest, facing death without winking an eye, and suffering pain without changing a muscle. Such men I acknowledge for my fellow-creatures—my equals. And yet,” added he, smiling, after a momentary pause, “and yet you who stood before a band of drunken savages, with their tomahawks and scalping-knives raised to take your life,—you, who did not even so much as change countenance during a discussion which was to decide whether you were to be given up to be tortured at the stake; why you cannot face a woman with whom you have associated, with little intermission, from childhood! You tremble at the idea of entering the parlour of an

honest country gentleman, and that gentleman your uncle! You can face death in all its forms of horror, but you cannot face a laugh, or even endure the mere abstract idea of a laugh conjured up by your own diseased fancy!"

The face and forehead of Sybrandt gradually kindled with alternate flushes of pride and shame, as the stranger proceeded. There was certainly more honey than gall in his speech, but our youth had long been in the habit of turning from the sweet to banquet on the bitter; and the old idea of being laughed at recurring in full force, caused his heart to swell and his forehead to moisten with the dew of strong agonized feeling. He remained dumbfounded, and if his life had depended upon it, could not have uttered one word.

"Did you ever," continued the stranger, in a tone of banter—"did you ever, in all your classic lore, come across a hero, or even a person of tolerable reputation, ashamed or afraid to face his equals, setting aside his superiors? The modesty we read of there, as an object of imitation to youth and age, is nothing more than that dignified self-consciousness which never asserts its claims to honours or rewards, but leaves the world to mete them out according to its own sense of obligation. They never thought of praising, or of holding up for imitation, that boyish and unmanly infirmity miscalled modesty, which bespeaks an internal consciousness of weakness or degradation, which makes men for ever ridiculous in their own eyes, even when not so in the eyes of others, and is the eternal, insurmountable obstacle to great actions. There is a glorious effrontery about conscious genius, which causes it to undertake and accomplish objects which, to timid, bashful cowards appear beyond the reach of human power."

The word coward grated harshly on Sybrandt's ear, and was appropriated at once to himself by that mental process through which he was accustomed to distil every thing into gall and wormwood. The stranger saw the workings of his mind, and went on :—

“Nor is the folly of such timid shrinking girlishness in man less contemptible than its cowardice. It is right, therefore, that he should be laughed at for the one, and despised for the other.”

Sybrandt could stand it no longer. He started from his seat, without feeling one spark of awkwardness or timidity in his whole composition.

“Is this language intended for me, sir ? because, if so, it cancels all obligation on my part. If I am not a man with women, you will find me so with men. No man shall say, or insinuate, that I am a fool or a coward. Did you or did you not apply these epithets to me ?”

“As much as falls to your share in your own honest consciousness, no more,” replied the other, with a most provoking indifference. Sybrandt surveyed him leisurely from top to toe, with an eye of unflinching defiance.

“Farewell, sir, for the present. I am your guest, and you are my benefactor. I would have been grateful to the end of my life for the kindness of your hospitality, and the favour of your example ; but you have left me nothing now but regrets that I ever accepted the one, or benefited by the other. Farewell, sir. Judge of the extent of my gratitude by my forgiveness of the insult you have just passed upon me. So far the debt is cancelled. Take care, I entreat you, how you run up a new score.”

He was proceeding to quit the house immediately,

when he was arrested by a hearty laugh from the stranger.

"Bravo! good! I honour you, Mr. Westbrook. You have spoken like a high-spirited, honourable gentleman. From my soul I reverence a man of courage. It is not without reason that courage is held the basis of all the virtues, since without it we may be driven from our best resolves by apprehension of the consequences. Without the courage to despise threats, dangers, death, no man can depend on his other virtues for a single moment. And yet it seems to me that all education tends to pave the way for making cowards of us. The nurse begins by frightening children with stories of ghosts and hobgoblins, and making them afraid to stir in the dark; and the priest ends by frightening the man with horrible pictures of the agonies of death and the torments of futurity. By heaven! it is a matter of surprise to me that all civilized men are not arant poltroons! But why," added he, after a pause, "why not act and speak at all times, and every where, with the same manly, free spirit you have just displayed? With such a face, such a figure, such a heart and mind, who is it that breathes or ever breathed the breath of life, be it man or woman, you need be afraid or ashamed to look full in the eye? Forgive me for thus trying you, or rather for affording you an opportunity of proving to yourself what you really are. No one that has seen you as I have done, in situations to try the nerves of any man, would ever dream of your being less than consummately brave; and no one that has conversed with you as I have done, and heard you, day after day, uttering the language of learning and good sense, would suspect you of folly, except he were

himself a fool! On my soul, what I said was but to aid you to "know thyself"—the most useful of all lessons to man. Hereafter, when you feel yourself shrinking from the encounter of a lady's eye, or a puppy's glance of ridicule, recollect that you have bearded the lion, called William Johnson, in his den, and never fear the face of man or woman from henceforward. Are we friends again?"

Sybrandt grasped the hand of Sir William in silence, and the incidents of that day exercised an influence over his future fortunes greater, perhaps, than all the precepts of the worthy Dominie Stettinius or the illustrious examples of classic lore. The force of habit being once mastered, the leaden fetters by which his genius had so long been held in bondage seemed to have lost their power, and from this time his deportment became every day more free and manly, his conversation more frank and racy. In short, he seemed about to verify the great truth, that, as by yielding to one temptation we prepare the way for submission to another, so an obstacle once surmounted is ever afterward more easily overcome.

CHAPTER XV.

Our Hero takes his departure.

THERE was a careless rankness about Sir William that invited confidence and inspired imitation. Add to this, he contrived every day to draw Sybrandt out, to make him aware of his own resources of intellect and knowledge, and animate his consciousness by giving him the post of honour, that is to say fatigue and danger, in all their forest adventures. He saw that his future happiness, as well as future fortunes, depended on his mind being forced out of its perverted course by excitement, action, and applause. He tried hard to make a man of him, for he saw that Sybrandt was likely to repay the trouble of the lessons he received.

The time now arrived when the meeting of the Mohawk chiefs to hold long talks and receive presents was to take place. The relation in which Sir William stood to the Indians was peculiar to these early settlements; when the savages, being numerous and warlike, were able to turn the scale between the mighty French governors of Canada and the puissant governors of New-York. It was therefore necessary to conciliate them in the first place by presents, and to fortify their influence by working indirectly on their secret consciousness of the superior power or superior wisdom of the white people. Perhaps the gentleman of whom we are

now speaking exercised in his day a greater personal influence over these wild and wayward sons of the forest, than any other white man that ever existed. It was not so much as the representative of the great king over the water that they respected and obeyed him. It was his frankness, integrity, and truth; but it was still more his courage, his vigour, and his superiority in hunting, in war, in action and endurance, in every thing which constitutes the pride and glory of savages, that made these people look up to him with unqualified respect and admiration. He stood alone among them, out of the protection of the laws of civilization and far from the reach of succour; yet he never suffered wrong or violence from these wild warriors, who might enter his house at midnight without knocking and without creating either fear or suspicion. It has often occurred to me that such a man, if any man or any means are adequate to the purpose, might, by voluntarily settling among our Indians, do much to wean them by degrees from their present mode of life. I do not mean that he should go there to receive the emoluments of office, or the profits of trade, or, least of all, as a means of living on the charitable contributions of others; but that he should identify himself with them—become one of their hunters, warriors, sages, and mingle by degrees those feelings and habits of civilized life not incompatible with their present situation, with their ancient modes of living. It might be a question, whether the white man would become more of an Indian, or the Indian more of a white man; yet all history indicates to us, that the ancient world was retrieved from barbarism by the agency of a few men of superior genius, or superior opportunities of

acquiring that knowledge and those habits necessary to civilization. But enough of this.

Sybrandt wondered to see the majestic grace and self-possession, mingled with respectful courtesy, exhibited by these untutored savages. They presented an example of manly independence in deportment and language, from which he derived a lesson for his own future conduct. It was curious to see how near they came to the perfection of high breeding, such as is now established as the standard of excessive refinement. They neither stared at objects to which they were unaccustomed, nor did they for a moment betray either surprise, curiosity, or inferiority. Careless in the glances they cast around, easy in their deportment, graceful in their actions, there was about them an indifference approaching almost to contempt, far more natural and graceful than that assumed as the characteristic of superior rank in the circles of the great. I am no enthusiast of Indian character or Indian manners; but this much I will say before I conclude this digression,—that the most graceful, most dignified presentation I ever witnessed was that of the Pawnee chiefs to our late worthy and ill-rewarded chief magistrate, James Monroe. They certainly put the stiff embroidery of the ambassadors, and the smirking, simpering, seamstresslike, uneasy consequence of the attachés quite in the background. Sybrandt learned some lessons in relation to manner and deportment from the Kings of the woods, that he could hardly have acquired even from a first-rate dancing-master.

It is not my purpose to record the acts and negotiations of Sir William and the council of chiefs. Still less shall I attempt a sketch of their respec-

tive orations, which, though they were not so *lengthy* as some we have heard, were very much to the purpose. The National Intelligencer, I presume, is regularly perused by most of my readers, and whoever digests that paper will never want to see or hear another speech as long as he lives; that is to say, if he is a reasonable person.

The departure of the chiefs was speedily followed by that of our hero, who accompanied a courier despatched by Sir William to New-York with an account of the result of the great council.

"I am sorry to lose your society," said Sir William; "I shall feel its loss this winter. But action—action—action, as the great orator said; action is the life of life—the vivifying spirit of all nature. When I find myself getting low I shall dash into the woods, and the sight of a deer shall console me for the loss of my friend. Farewell. I hope we shall meet again."

"Do not doubt it," said Sybrandt, "if you do not come to me, I will one day, if I live, come to you. But you will some time or other visit Albany, and then you shall see—"

"Catalina?" said the other, archly. "Well, a fair lady is worth a far visit, and I think I will come to your wedding, if you will give me due notice; that is to say, if you ever muster courage to look that young lady in the face, who is, I dare say, ten times more ugly—I beg pardon—more formidable, than the one-eyed Paskingoe."

Sybrandt coloured, and felt some of his old feelings crawling over him; but he repressed them by a mighty effort, and replied with assumed ease:

"I promise to ask you to my wedding, but my funeral will probably come first, and I will bid you to that."

“What! a relapse! I thought I had performed a radical cure.” Then assuming an earnest solemnity, he went on, “Westbrook, remember, now that you are going among old scenes and old associations, that you guard against a return of old feelings, weaknesses, and self-delusions. Are you not a man—an upright, brave, and intellectual man? Do I not know that your heart is pure, and your intellect unclouded? that you are by family, education, and character a fit associate, an equal to any man, or any woman either, that you are likely to encounter? Why then, in the name of that heaven I know you dare look in the face—why should you falter, and lose your self-possession both of mind and body in the presence of any man or woman, or any number of men and women? Think of this. Remember what I now say, when we are distant from each other; and rely upon it, that if Catalina is worth the winning, you will win her if you dare. Deference is what is due to every woman, and what every woman likes; but if I know the sex, they are such admirers of courage, that they can never be brought to love a man that *fears* even them. Now God be with you, Sybrandt, and so farewell!”

CHAPTER XVI.

Showing that old Scenes revive old Habits.

THEY parted each with regret, and as Sybrandt proceeded on his journey, he tried to persuade himself he was all, or might be all, Sir William had described. But certain misgivings and sinkings of the soul, as he turned his thoughts towards home, and began to anticipate his reception from his friends, warned him that he must look well to himself and nerve his heart, or he might again sink into what honest Bunyan calls the "slough of Despond," and never rise again.

The little party, consisting of Sybrandt, old Tjerck, and the courier, proceeded to the banks of the Mohawk river, where they embarked in a canoe for Schenectady, then the frontier town of all the western settlements of this goodly State, of which it now constitutes one of the antiquities. Not a house, not a vestige of cultivated life adorned the banks of the stream, yet still all was beautiful ; for what is more lovely than the union of crystal waters, verdant meadows, waving forests, and azure skies—the combination and the master-work of the great Creator ! There were men alive not many years ago, who still remembered what the whole country then was, and whose eyes, though dimmed with age, yet saw what it had since become. The land itself, and the owners of the land, are changed ; every animate and inanimate object—every thing living, and every thing dead—all changed ! The red man is gone, and the

white man is in his place. Such are the mutations of the world! Shall we lament them? No. It is the will and the work of Him that made all, governs all, disposes all; and it is all for the best, or chance is Providence, and Providence is chance.

They arrived without accident at Schenectady, which, though partly rebuilt, still exhibited deep and melancholy traces of the deplorable massacre and conflagration of 1689, when the French and Indians surprised the inhabitants in their beds, and set fire to their habitations. It was a cruel butchery of men, women, and children, which, according to custom, was laid to the charge of the Indians, whom it is impossible to restrain at such times. But what right have civilized men to complain of the excesses of savages, whom they associate with them as allies; whose passions they first stimulate, and then pretend to control? Yet in the midst of these horrors a ray of humanity breaks out from the darkness of unlimited massacre. A gentleman of the name of Glen resided with his family a little way above Schenectady, on the rich flats on the opposite side of the river, where his house is, or was lately, standing, and in possession of his descendants. He had at times interposed his good offices in favour of the French prisoners taken by the Mohawks, and the French now remembered his kindness. They spared his home, and restored all his relatives to liberty.

As Sybrandt approached nearer towards home, he began to feel in anticipation certain decided symptoms of his old disease. He caught himself studying how he should act, and what he should say to his cousin, instead of relying on the circumstances of the moment to direct his conduct. He worked himself up into a worry of doubt, embarrassment, and appre-

hension; he again suffered the tortures of the sly laughing eye of Catalina, and actually shuddered at the thought of how awkwardly he should behave himself. In short, by the time they came to Albany he had forgot the manly remonstrances of Sir William, and instead of the joys of a speedy reunion with his friends, felt only the fears of their anticipated ridicule.

He arrived at Albany to dinner, and lingered some time afterward in that strange indecision which is characteristic of his state of mind. At length old Tjerck got out of all patience, and by his ill-humour brought his young master to a decision. As they approached the sober and venerable mansion-house, and saw at a distance its old gray walls, half-hid by towering elms, with chimneys pointing to the skies, Sybrandt actually trembled with conflicting emotions. Had it been possible, he would have passed on to the abode of his benefactor without stopping. But his only road lay directly before the mansion-house, and to pass it would be both absurd and disrespectful.

It was now just after sunset, and honest Ariel was walking on the long piazza, which looked towards the river, with Catalina. The scene was lovely and quiet beyond description, and something had carried the thoughts of Catalina to the absence of Sybrandt. I think it happened to be the anniversary of the day he had saved her life.

"I wonder," said she, at length, "what has become of cousin Sybrandt? Is it not time that he should be home? and is it not strange no one has heard of him, uncle?"

"Poor fellow!" said the good-natured Ariel, "to be sure it is. I don't wonder at not hearing from him, for you know the mail don't travel in the wilderness.

But he ought to have been home some months ago. I am sadly afraid something has happened to him. He was such an awkward fellow : he never could do any thing handy or clever. I never could teach him to ring a pig's nose, for the life of me."

"Yet he was brave as a lion," said the other, musing. "What day of the month is this, uncle?"

"The twenty-sixth of May."

"True, the very day." And again she mused.

"I should not be surprised," said Ariel, after a pause, "if he was either murdered, or a prisoner to the Indians."

"God forbid!" exclaimed Catalina, lifting up her hands, and clasping them together; "God forbid my dear cousin Sybrandt should come to any harm!"

"Aha!" quoth Ariel, "what would the colonel say if he heard this?—dear cousin Sybrandt!"

"He has no right to say any thing, and if he did I would not care. But who is that coming yonder?"

"Where," said little Ariel, standing on tiptoe.

"Yonder, on the Albany road—two persons on horseback."

"It must be the colonel and his man. He has been to Albany to-day."

"No, it is *not* the colonel," said Catalina, and she looked still more intently on the travellers, whose figures were rendered somewhat indistinct in the twilight now gathering round. They approached the gate which led into the woody avenue winding up to the mansion, and one of them dismounted to open it.

"Who *can* it be?" cried Catalina, while a gentle heaving of her bosom and a little shortness of breath marked a more than ordinary interest in the question.

In a few minutes the persons on horseback emerged from the woody glen, through which the road wound

its way, at a little distance from the mansion, where they could be more distinctly seen from the piazza.

"One of them seems to have a black face," observed Ariel.

"If it should be old Tjerck!" exclaimed the young damsel, eagerly.

"No, no," replied the other, despondingly, "I fear we shall never see either him or his young master again;" and his good heart overflowed to his eyes. By this time the horsemen had dismounted in the dusky evening, and approached the piazza.

"Who can it be?" thought Catalina, while a presentiment fluttered about her heart. Sybrandt had distinguished a female on the piazza as he approached, and a thrill of mingled pleasure and apprehension came over him. He had rode at such a slow, lingering pace, that old Tjerck muttered to himself, "Icod, if young massa been hunting a bear, he make more hurry dan to see Miss Catalina!"

Ariel received the young man with shouts of joy and innumerable honest shakes of the hand; but Catalina, remembering with what leisure and deliberation he had approached to receive her welcome, repressed the warm, generous impulses of her heart, and wrapping herself in the mantle of maidenly pride, gave him a reception so affectedly flippant and careless that he felt it in his innermost soul. His pride and his feelings were equally wounded, and the moment of meeting between these two young people was the prelude to a thousand after mistakes and misapprehensions. Sybrandt, after receiving, with all his old awkwardness and constraint, the kind congratulations of the rest of the family, made some miserable mumbling attempts at an excuse for going to see his benefactor, and departed with a heart bursting with its disappointed dreams, that had been

cherished in secret, and a mind wounded by the consciousness of folly, weakness, and inconsistency.

"You don't seem glad to get home again," said the good Dennis, observing that Sybrandt was silent and abstracted; "but I suppose you are tired and sleepy. Well, go to bed, and to-morrow you shall tell your story."

Sybrandt retired to bed, but not to that balmy rest which a tired body and a quiet mind brings with it evermore. He lay awake, thinking over the past, and blaming his own wayward follies. He recalled to mind the lessons and the example of Sir William, and settled the matter a little before daylight, that he would cast off the chains of the foul fiend that seemed waiting to resume her empire the moment of his return, and be what he was every where else but to the woman he most wished to please. Before he was up in the morning, he heard the cheerful voice of Ariel calling upon him to come forth and eat his breakfast, and tell his story, and go over to the mansion-house, to see him hive the bees, that he pronounced to be on the eve of emigrating, from the commotion he observed among them the day before.

Accordingly, after breakfast, they rode over to the mansion-house, where Sybrandt behaved himself better, and was received more to his liking, than the night before; for Catalina had schooled herself, and softened herself too, by recollecting she had treated him thus unkindly on the anniversary of the day he had saved her from drowning. Catalina inquired the cause of his long absence, and even condescended to say she felt great uneasiness lest he should have been murdered, or taken captive by the hostile Indians and carried into Canada. This sentiment, kindly and unaffectedly uttered, warmed the heart of Sybrandt into a degree of confidence, and he related

the history of his trading voyage with a truth and simplicity which gave it additional interest. There is nothing throws greater dignity about a man, and more contributes to make him an object of interest, than encountering and overcoming dangers and sufferings. The tenderness, the love of glory, and the admiration for courage, which are inherent in the female heart, are ever excited and called forth by the recital of perils or the detail of courageous daring. Every woman is in this respect a Desdemona, and Catalina was certainly a woman, for she was now eighteen. The moment she heard the history of the adventure of the fishing-house, and the escape from the deputation of the Mohawk chiefs, Sybrandt gained a new interest in her eyes, by being thus associated with danger and death. Under the influence of these feelings, she treated him with a gentle and frank kindness, which placed him on good terms with himself, and gave an ease and freedom to his deportment that made Catalina one day observe, with a smile, "that he had certainly met with a dancing-master in the woods."

"But what has become of your admirer, Colonel Sydenham?" asked Sybrandt, with no small trepidation, after finishing his adventures.

"O, he is gone," said she, slightly blushing. "His regiment was ordered to Fort George, on the lake, not long after you left us."

Sybrandt was pleased with the information, but he did not like the blush. His old enemies played about him for a moment, but he whipped them away, and compelled himself to ask other questions, which by degrees led to a detail of all that had happened in his absence. During this period, which was only a few months, a great revolution had taken place, which I shall proceed to record with all due fidelity.

CHAPTER XVII.

An irruption of wandering Arabs, and a swarming of Bees.

I HAVE before noticed the inroads made upon the virtuous simplicity of the rural populace among whom is laid the scene of this history. Not content with a variety of innovations, the officers at length committed the enormity of introducing private theatricals. They corrupted an honest Dutchman of the neighborhood to hire them his barn, which was fitted up as a theatre, and in which they performed plays three times a week, to the utter dismay of the good Dominie Stettinius; who justly saw in this pestilent innovation the seeds of mischief to his hitherto simple and innocent flock. The young people were attracted by these outlandish shows, and late hours, family feuds, nightly elopements, and sometimes something worse, were the consequences. The good and pious dominie sighed and fretted at these melancholy symptoms of approaching corruption of manners, and raised his voice from the pulpit every Sabbath-day against the theatre and its consequences to his beloved people, over whom he had watched for almost half a century. But the torrent was too strong for the good man to put back or turn from its course; for such is the sad weakness of human nature, that the best security for its innocence is to keep it ignorant of the very existence of guilt. Both manners and morals seem every where at the

mercy of strangers and innovators—of fashions rather than opinions.

But, as if this were not enough, about the period in which the seductions of the barn theatre began to infect the morals and habits of the young people, and their consequences to appear in the indications I have just recited, a famous new-light preacher made his appearance among them, and roused the very echoes with a strain of fervid and impassioned eloquence, which created a sect that seems one day destined to extend itself to every climate and every country of the habitable world. The sober, practical, and rational doctrines and exhortations of the good dominie, though clothed in the language and embellished with the eloquence and grace of a scholar, faded into nothing compared with the trumpet voice, violent gesture, and furious declamation of the new apostle. His fold, especially the precious young lambs that had grown up under his eye, and whom he loved, began to stray away; his flock every Sabbath showed the absence of some one that was never absent before; and many an empty seat gave token of the backsliding of some inexperienced soul, lured away from the gentle lustre of his pure lamp of truth by the flaring, fiery tail of this erratic meteor.

And still another evil came to beset and confound the good man, and complete the wicked trio. A member of the wandering tribe of American Arabs came among and seduced the wayward affections of the daughter and heiress of his ancient and nearest neighbour, honest Yof Vandervelden. He taught certain practices then exceeding rife in the region whence he came; and the short and the long of it was, the worthy man found himself under the

necessity of making a sacrifice of his dislike, to the honour of the family. He soon afterward died, and Ananias Gookin, as the wandering Arab was called, took possession of the estate in right of his wife. Then were the honest Dutchmen astonished, confounded, and dismayed at the innovations and improvements of Ananias. He altered his house, he altered his barn, he altered his fences, and he altered every thing. When he had done altering, and exhausted all his ingenuity, he began to pull down, and, finally, one day abducted the old Dutch weathercock, which was brought from Holland, and had pointed due north upon the top of the mansion of the worthy Vandervelden far back as the memory of man could reach.

The dominie groaned in spirit, and his firmness forsook him, especially when a day or two afterward a whole wagon load of Squire Gookin's cousins came over to pass a week with him. Before that week expired, they had so confounded the good man with guessing and asking questions, that one night, after being penned in a corner of one of his own fields for upwards of three hours by a couple of these terrible guessers, who pointed out a hundred improvements in his modest, comfortable glebe, and expressed an intention of opening a school to teach all the children English, the good dominie left his flock to be devoured by the wolves, and never returned. He had heard of the arrival of a Dutch ship at New-York, whither he bent his way sorrowing, and whence he embarked for his native honest Holland to return no more. He left a letter with his blessing and advice to Sybrandt, accompanied by a fine folio copy of the works of Hugo Grotius, in token of his affectionate remembrance. Honest

soul! the simplicity of religion and manners which he advocated and exemplified during his whole life, has, we doubt, been illy exchanged for the cant of enthusiasm in the one, and boasted refinements in the other.

These details, which proved mutually interesting, were at length interrupted by a confused and triumphant medley of sounds and voices that made them both start in dismay. They ran into the garden, whence the noise proceeded, to see what was the matter, where they found Ariel at the head of all the household troops, man, woman, and child, black, white, and gray. He was furiously beating a frying-pan, accompanied by all the others, each of whom had contrived to reinforce his music by some rare contrivance of his own. Here stood aunt Nauntje, the cook, jingling a great bunch of keys; and there our old friend Tjerck, who had been summoned by Ariel for the occasion, beating a tin kettle with an old rusty ramrod, while the little imps of the kitchen exaggerated the terrible concert by mustering a most singular variety of incongruous discords. Over all was heard the shrill voice of Ariel, scolding, directing, restraining, and aggravating his familiars as occasion seemed to require.

A little condensed black cloud appeared hovering over their heads, and sailing about in different directions among the trees, to which all their attention seemed to be directed. As it inclined to approach or recede, the concert became weaker or louder, while eager anxiety and expectation sat on the faces of all. More than once Ariel denounced the imperial Nauntje as an "old fool," for jingling her keys too loud; and many a time did Nauntje retort, by declaring "Massa Ariel would scare the crea-

tures into the woods," by the vehemence with which he cudgelled his frying-pan. At length the little wayward community, after enjoying a while their emancipation from the domination of the mother-hive, all at once darted down and settled themselves upon the broad-brimmed hat of honest Ariel; being thereunto incited either by one of the female caprices of the queen bee, or by a fine carnation pink stuck in the hatband.

Consternation and dismay followed this unaccountable manœuvre; the music ceased, and Ariel stood still for once in his life, with a whole nation quartered on his beaver. It was impossible to resist an inclination to laugh at the oddity of the adventure, but in truth it was no laughing matter. Of all the populace of this world, the bees are the most capricious; there are some people they will permit to handle them with impunity, while they will dart at others with indescribable fury the moment they approach them. I have seen a swarm of young bees taken up by handfuls and put into the new hive, without any symptoms of hostility, by a person who either possessed some secret power, or to whom they were attracted by some unaccountable affinity. Such a man was old Tjerck, who now came cautiously forward with a new straw hive, which he held directly over the head of Ariel, desiring him at the same time to stand still for his life. Poor Ariel was the last man in the world to stand still, or to hold his tongue; but on this occasion he played the statue to a miracle. There never was a finer figure than Ariel with the great beehive for a hat, except a fine lady of the year 1831 in a fashionable Parisian bonnet. While the bees were consulting in mysterious hummings about the ex-

pediency of removing, and some of them were reconnoitring about his ears, apparently with an intent to make a lodgment there, the little man stood fidgetting, first lifting one leg then the other, hitching his shoulders, and making divers other gestures indicative of dire impatience. At length he could stand it no longer, and roared out—

"You bloody old fool, do you think I am going to stand still here all day?" And thereupon the whole swarm took flight and disappeared across the river, whether alarmed at the noise, or from some sudden caprice of her majesty the queen bee.

"Dere—dere he go; now massa Ariel got him," exclaimed Tjerck, in the bitterness of his heart. "I glad of it."

"And so am I," said Ariel; "they may go to the d—l for me. I wouldn't have kept still three minutes longer for as many beehives as could stand between here and Jericho."

"No," grumbled Tjerck, in an under-tone; "massa Ariel nebber tand till, sept when he sleeping in church."

"Huh!" said old Nauntje; "massa Ariel don't know no more about bees dan a bull's foot."

Ariel swore there was not a man in the province understood hiving bees better; but they all gave it against him, and declared with one voice that the loss of the young swarm was entirely owing to his not standing still and holding his tongue. Upon this he denounced them as "a pack of fools," and departed in wrath, determined not to stay to dinner. In passing the kitchen, however, his natural instinct prompted him to look in, and the sight of a fine roasting pig, with a skin as white as that of a fashionable belle after a winter's campaign, disarmed

him in a moment. He hovered round the hallowed precincts of the kitchen till the return of queen Nauntje, to whom he gave sundry directions about roasting the pig, concluding by a solemn injunction to put plenty of summer savory in the stuffing.

Dinner passed off pleasantly, and Sybrandt was delighted to find that he drank wine with Catalina without its going down the wrong way; nay, that he could actually cut up a pig when everybody was looking at him, without falling into an agony. In the evening they strolled out upon the lawn, and stood on the low green banks of the gliding river, watching the passing vessels as they slipped along; listening to the melodies of lowing herds, tinkling bells, loud rural laughs, and all the combination of sweet peaceful sounds, wafted across the little river in the delicious quiet of a long summer twilight. Sybrandt gradually became inspired by the scene and the occasion; and unlocking, by involuntary degrees, the stores of his mind, and giving wings to the dormant vigour of his imagination, delighted, instructed, and almost astonished Catalina with the inspirations of his new-born intellect.

While thus engaged, they saw one of the little black boys come running towards them in great haste, as if something was the matter at home. When he came up all he could say was to beg Sybrandt to speed to the house, for Hans Pipe, the Indian, was there very drunk. Accordingly Sybrandt hastened away as fast as possible, leaving Catalina to return at leisure.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A civilized Savage.

HANS PIPE, as he was called by the country people around, was an Indian of the Algonquin nation, which had been almost exterminated by the Mohawks in a war that happened many years before the period at which we are now arrived. A large portion of their warriors was cut off, and the remnant of the nation obliged to emigrate into Canada, where they were received and protected by the governor-general. Hans, whose Indian name was Minikoue, or I drink, justified this appellation, for he even exceeded his fellows in the Indian devotion to fire-water. He had been taken prisoner by the Mohawks, and rescued from torture by the influence of Colonel Vancour, who endeavoured to teach him the habits and manners of civilized life, and to attach him to his family by kindness and protection. But the usual melancholy consequences resulted from these kind and benevolent intentions. The Indian, in proportion as he lost the habits of the savage, acquired the vices of the civilized man, sharpened to a keener edge by the wild vigour of barbarism and the early absence of the habit of self-restraint. His natural cunning was quickened by the acquirement of some of the practices of the white man; and his natural passions, such as cruelty, revenge, and the love of drinking, strengthened,

—the first two by an infinite series of mortifications, insults, perhaps injuries, received from the white people among whom he sojourned, the latter by facility in the means of gratification.

There are certain plants, and fruits, and flowers that grow wild in the forest, which improve by being transplanted to the garden and cultivated with care ; there are others that shoot forth in the rank and worthless luxuriance of weeds ; and there are others that perish under the fostering hand of the most skilful gardener. There are birds and quadrupeds that may be tamed, and others which retain deep traces of their native wildness to the last. So does it seem to be with the race of man. As the Indian orator once said to President Monroe, " The white man is born for the sunshine, the red man for the shade." The white man, the black man, and the man of every colour but the red, may be tamed, and improve by taming. He alone seems, indeed, born for the woods ; it is there the virtues he possesses can alone be exercised to the benefit of himself and his tribe. Place him in the sunshine, in the haunts of social and civilized life,—and sad is the experience, and woful the truth—he becomes, ninety-nine times in a hundred, the worst, the most mischievous of mongrels ; a compound of the ferocity of the savage, and the cunning, deceit, and sensuality of the civilized scoundrel.

So it happened with Hans Pipe. He became a drunkard and a vagabond ; and was finally turned away from Colonel Vancour's house, for having drawn his knife upon one of the black children, who refused to bring him another mug of cider. He was too lazy to work except at trifling jobs, for which he asked nothing but liquor, and to which nothing but liquor

could incite him. His days were spent in drunkenness and beastly exhibitions of savage indecencies, and his nights consumed in prowling about thieving, or in barns or outhouses, sleeping away the effects of his daily debauch. Sometimes, but very rarely, he would come to the mansion-house, when he was sober, and beg for food or clothing, which was never refused him. Perhaps a more worthless, dangerous and revengeful being never crawled upon the earth, than this wretched outcast of the savage and civilized world. His appearance was horrible and appalling. His long, lank, raven hair hung about his shoulders, and almost covered his low forehead; his high cheek-bones, flattened nose, wide nostrils, and still wider mouth, together with his miserable garments and dirty habits, made the heart shudder to look upon him. But it was his eye—his bitter, malignant, bloodshot eye, circled with the flaming ring of habitual intemperance, within which rolled the ball of fire, that gave the most unequivocal indications of the fiend which kept the citadel of his heart. It discoursed of murder, open or secret, at midnight or midday; of a vengeance which a moment might light up, and years would not extinguish; of secret plots and open daring.

It happened that there was no man about the house, or within call, when Hans Pipe came into the kitchen brutally intoxicated, and, as usual in that situation, insolent and ungovernable. Colonel Vancouver had rode out after dinner on a visit of business; the labourers had not yet returned from the fields, and Ariel had sallied forth to expatiate on the delights of the roasted pig to his neighbour Mynheer Frelinghuysen. Sybrandt found the miserable, degraded being brandishing his club, and vociferating

for more liquor with all his might. He was enraged into that sort of half-wilful madness which drunkenness often produces, and which is not so much the absence of reason, as of a disposition to obey its dictates. The little black boys were cowering in corners, afraid to run away, and even the redoubtable Aunt Nauntje shrunk from asserting her authority in her own peculiar dominion.

Sybrandt at first tried to soothe Captain Pipe, as he called himself, into something like good-humour, in hopes he would go away peaceably. But the captain had lost all control of himself, or did not choose to exert it, and answered our hero with brutal threats against the whole household unless his wishes were complied with. As the discussion went on he became so indecently abusive, that Madam Vancour and Catalina, whose apprehensions had called them to the spot, were glad to retire out of hearing. Sybrandt became angry, and at length, finding the captain proceeding to force open a cupboard where he expected to find liquor, he seized him by the shoulders and jerked him back with such force as to send him reeling to the other extremity of the kitchen. The fury of the madman redoubled. He seemed all at once to become steady, and advancing quickly towards Sybrandt, who had no weapon in his hand, he dealt him a blow with his heavy walking-stick, which, had it taken full effect, would have disabled him effectually. Fortunately, Sybrandt, though taken by surprise, preserved his head by a quick motion on one side; but it fell on his left shoulder with a force that made him reel. The little black boys cried out with all their force; old Nauntje sallied forth as fast as her limbs could carry her, to call for help, and Catalina, uttering a piercing

shriek, flew into the house for the colonel's sword, with which she returned in a minute.

But the contest was over before she arrived. Captain Pipe, perceiving his antagonist partly disabled by the blow he had given, and having become infuriated with rage, was now a perfect savage, reckless of every thing but vengeance, and panting for blood. He drew the long knife which he always wore about him since he was cast off by the colonel, and flourishing it in the air with a shrill demoniac shout, he made a mortal lunge at the heart of our hero, whose only defence was his eye and his right arm, the former of which he kept keenly and steadily fixed on the motions of the captain. The blow was well aimed, but the activity and coolness of Sybrandt enabled him to avert it by darting on one side. The knife passed through his clothes just under the left arm, and at the instant the young man closed with the savage, holding him so tightly that he could not readily extricate his weapon. A momentary yet desperate struggle ensued, which ended in Sybrandt's tripping up the heels of his adversary, and at the same moment throwing him backwards with such force that he fell upon one of the great andirons in the chimney, and lay senseless. The knife remained clenched in his hand; but his eyes were closed, and the blood flowed in torrents from the back of his head.

At this moment Catalina returned with the sword, which she conjured Sybrandt to accept. "The wretch is not dead," said she; "I see the motion of his breathing. He is only practising one of his savage arts upon you. Dear Sybrandt, take the sword; and—and—do not kill him, but stand on your defence." The youth long remembered the

"dear Sybrandt," and so did the Indian, who, as Catalina had shrewdly suspected, was only playing the opossum, as the phrase is in rare old Virginia ; that is, only making believe he was insensible. He intended to watch his opportunity, the moment he recovered a little, to jump up and accomplish the destruction of his victim. But the gift of the sword and the caution of Catalina defeated his intention, and engendered in his malignant heart a feeling of intense and bitter vengeance, that afterward more than once put the life of that young lady in imminent peril.

The adventure ended in the arrival of some of the neighbours, whom the cries of Aunt Nauntje had brought to her aid, and the depositing of Captain Pipe in prison, where he expiated his violence by a confinement of several months. Here he had full leisure to brood over his revenge, and lay his plans for its gratification. When the period of his imprisonment expired, he adopted an entire new mode of life. He became perfectly temperate, docile, and industrious. By degrees he gained the pity and good-will of the neighbourhood, got plenty of work, and saved every penny of his wages. Colonel Vancour and his family pitied, forgave, and encouraged him, not only by employment, but by various little presents of money and clothes. Among the rest Catalina, although she always shuddered at his approach, presented him with a Bible, which he was constantly found poring over in his hours of leisure ; for he had been taught to read while under the patronage of Colonel Vancour. He constantly attended church, and became a communicant, to the great delight of many pious, well-meaning people, who viewed him as a brand rescued from the fire.

But old Tjerck, who had once been a prisoner in his youth among the Indians, shook his wise gray head, and often said, "He no good Christian—not he. I see de debbil Indian in he eye yet. When Indian most good, den he going to be most worst. I know him; he like de panter—he most quiet when he jist going to jump." But a white prophet has litt^{le} honour in his own country, much less a black one.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Additional Traits of the civilized Savage.

WHEN Captain Pipe had saved money enough for the purpose, he one day went to Albany, and bought him a handsome musket to shoot ducks with, as he said. From this time his industry flagged not a little, and he passed much of his time in the woods along the river, and sometimes nobody knew where he was gone or what was his object. His object, his sole object was revenge. He hated Colonel Vancour, because he himself had forfeited his protection by his base ingratitude; he hated Sybrandt, for having wounded and conquered him; and, above all, he hated Catalina, for having robbed him of one of the sweetest moments of revenge, by cautioning Sybrandt against his wiles, and furnishing him with a weapon to defeat them. Finally, he knew that he could consummate his revenge on all three, by taking the life of Catalina. This he intended to do the first safe opportunity, and then flee into Canada to the remnant of his tribe. For this purpose, the moment he had got the musket, which was safer than his knife, by enabling him to commit the crime unseen, he set about his purpose with the patience, and cunning, and perseverance which savages are known to exercise in the prosecution of their revenge. But still, whatever may be the intensity of the Indian desire for vengeance, it is in

some measure a point of honour to achieve it at the least possible risk to himself. In all their undertakings, the savages never wantonly or unnecessarily trifle with their own safety. They die bravely but they seldom seek death.

Wherever Catalina went he kept her in his eye, hovering and lounging at a distance, apparently taking no notice of her, but intent on his game. In the daytime he was prowling about the deep glen we have described as once a favourite resort of Sybrandt, in hopes the young lady might chance to pay it a visit; and at night he was on the watch about the mansion-house, like a hungry wolf thirsting for the blood of his victim. The barking of the dogs often excited the notice of the household, who believed it was occasioned by the maraudings of wild beasts, which at that time were no uncommon visitors. On one or two occasions a watch was set; but nothing was discovered, for a more watchful, wary enemy was watching them.

One dark, cloudy night, in the sultry month of August, Catalina was sitting at her window, which opened towards a copse of bushes and vines that had been suffered to grow up in a state of wild luxuriance, for the purpose of sheltering a hundred little birds, that sung and built their nests, and raised their young in safety among the tangled branches. It had rained early in the evening, leaving a dark, heavy sky, loaded with vapours, and a sweltering heat in the air, that disposed both mind and body to indolent relaxation. Swarms of little fireflies flitted gayly among the grass and foliage, illuminating the dark obscurity; and at far distance, the lazy lightnings flashed dimly at intervals upon the bosom of the dun, moveless clouds. Finding

the light in her room attracted a vast variety of the wandering insects of the night, Catalina removed it into a little closet adjoining, and seating herself again at the window, indulged a long glance at the past, a long and anxious look into the future.

For some time past the hearts of Sybrandt and Catalina had been quietly and imperceptibly drawing nearer to each other. As they were more together, the former gradually overcame his shy awkwardness, and that propensity to create mortifications to himself which had been the bane of his early life. Having no one to excite jealousy, and no fear of ridicule before his eyes, his heart and his intellects gradually budded, blossomed, and expanded into full maturity. The riches of knowledge which had hitherto lain buried amid the rubbish of awkward rusticity, the sprightly good-humour and spirit which had been repressed by Sybrandt's great talents for inflicting self-torment, now began to come forth in rich profusion, exhibiting a brighter polish every day in the soft collision with the purer metal of a sprightly, cultivated female mind. He was fast becoming what nature had intended,— an object of interest and consideration to all around him; and the star of woman was gradually leading him to the haven of happiness as well as distinction. "How much my cousin Sybrandt improves every day," thought Catalina, as she sat at the open window, and sighed to the silence of night and darkness.

The family, all but her, had long retired to repose, when suddenly a loud growling of the dogs awoke her from her revery. At the same instant she thought she distinguished something or somebody crouching about the little copsewood. In another instant she distinctly heard something like the shutting

of a penknife, and saw a number of sparks of fire flash in the obscurity whence the sound seemed to proceed. The young lady started, and was reflecting a moment what this could mean, when the same sound, the same flashing of sparks of fire occurred, followed by a hissing sound, and a blue flame rising apparently out of the earth. The dogs now began to bark most furiously, and Catalina, shutting her window, soon reposed her chaste and lovely limbs between the snowy virgin sheets, not more white and innocent than herself. She pondered for a while on the odd things she had witnessed; but soon the vision of a tall, dark-eyed youth, with teeth whiter than her own fair bosom, or all Afric's ivory, flitted before her half-sleeping, half-waking fancy, and closing her bright blue eye with gentle pressure, prompted her innocent sleep with a thousand glowing visions of future happiness.

Some little discussion took place at breakfast concerning the uproar among the dogs, and Catalina mentioned what she had seen. The general opinion was that the noise was imaginary or accidental—the sparks nothing more than fireflies, and the blue flame a will-o'-the-wisp. In a little while the whole was forgotten, nor would it ever have been recalled to their recollection but for a circumstance which took place not long afterward.

CHAPTER XX.

A Hit and a Miss.

CATALINA, a few days, or rather, as I believe, the very next day after the appearance of the will-o'-the-wisp, went to Albany on a visit of a week to one of her friends. It was customary in those days to make little journeys as well as great ones on horseback, and Catalina was fond of an exercise in which she excelled. In returning from this visit she was caught in a heavy shower, which obliged her to change her dress, and the maid had placed the wet garments on an old fashioned high chair, just before her chamber window, for the purpose of drying.

"What, *you* here!" cried Ariel, who had just entered through the garden, as usual, that he might have a chance of reconnoitring the kitchen; "you here!—why I'll swear I saw either you or your ghost sitting at the window as I came in."

Catalina smiled, and explained the cause of his mistake.

"By Jove!" cried Ariel, "I must get your woman to dress me up a scarecrow for my cornfield, for I never saw any thing more natural."

About ten in the evening of that day, as the whole family, together with Sybrandt and Ariel—the latter, as usual, fast asleep in his chair—were sitting around the supper-table, they were startled by the report of a gun close to the rear of the house, as it seemed, followed by a loud barking of

the dogs. Sybrandt and Ariel ran out of the back door to see what was the matter, and found the whole population of the kitchen in great commotion, talking all together, each one telling what they knew or imagined. One declared that the gun was fired from the little copsewood, another from behind the raspberry bushes, a third from behind the garden fence, and a fourth was sure he saw a man jump over the fence immediately after the report of the gun. As usual in such cases, it was impossible to come at the truth, and as no harm seemed to have been done, most people came to the conclusion that none was intended. On returning to her room, Catalina found the old high stuffed damask chair on which her wet garments had been placed to dry, lying on the floor. It seemed to have been violently overturned, but her maid solemnly declared she had not been in the room since her mistress left it, and the whole household declared the same. The mystery therefore remained unexplained.

The next morning, however, when the maid came to fold up the dress heretofore described, she was astonished to find it perforated with round holes in two several places.

"Lord, young missee!" exclaimed she, "what have you done to your riding-habit? it's all full of holes, I declare!" Catalina was puzzled to death. She tried to recollect where and how it was possible they could have come there, but nothing occurred to account for them. In examining the old chair to see if there was any thing there that might throw light on the matter, Catalina at length observed a small hole in the damask, about the size of those in her riding-habit, into which she ran her taper finger, and feeling something hard, with some little difficulty drew forth a leaden bullet. The maid shrieked.

and the young lady turned pale at the association of circumstances that instantly presented themselves to her mind, accompanied by the recollection of the strange appearances she had witnessed a few nights before.

The little maid was eagerly running to exhibit the bullet to Madam Vancour and the colonel, when Catalina stopped and directed her to remain where she was. The young lady then sat down and reflected on the course it was proper to pursue. She knew the uneasiness, nay, misery, she would inflict on her mother especially, by communicating circumstances which seemed sufficiently to indicate she had some secret enemy who sought her life; and doubted whether any measures that might be adopted to secure the assassin or protect her in future from his designs would be effectual. At length Sybrandt occurred to her, as one who might most secretly investigate this affair, and afford her in the mean time protection as well as advice. Accordingly she resolved to communicate the whole affair to him the first opportunity, enjoining the little maid to silence at the same time, under penalty of her highest displeasure. The little maid was sadly mortified at losing the opportunity of telling such a wonderful story, but being greatly attached to her young mistress, to whom she had been given at the moment of her birth, she obeyed reluctantly.

Sybrandt came over soon after to inquire if any new discoveries had been made, for he could not help cherishing certain vague suspicions that there must be something more than chance or fancy in the discharge of the gun, and the appearances observed by Catalina as heretofore described. Catalina invited him to walk in the garden, and there disclosed all the particulars as recorded in the preceding pages,

up to the discovery of the bullet, which she exhibited. The young man shuddered, while at the same time his eye flashed fire. He could scarcely restrain himself from catching Catalina in his arms, and pressing her to his bosom, as mothers do their babes when they apprehend the approach of danger. He gazed on her for some moments with the most intense interest, and then exclaimed:

"Dear Catalina! I will protect and defend you with my life, and all my life!"

"I know you will, Sybrandt," replied she, with a full look of more than gratitude. "I know you will, for you have risked it once already for me. But perhaps, after all, it may be accident, the firing of this gun."

Sybrandt shook his head. "I would not needlessly alarm you; but it is plain to me that you have some secret enemy who is seeking your life. The appearances you saw that night in the copse-wood are now clearly explained to my mind. The click you heard, and described as resembling the opening or shutting of a penknife, was, I have no doubt, the cocking of a gun; the sparks were those of the flint; and the flame, the flashing of the pan. I recollect it was a damp, wet evening, which accounts for the gun missing fire."

The explanation was clear; Catalina felt a faintness come over her, and leaned heavily on his arm.

"Go on," said she, gasping for breath; "go on; let me know the worst I am to expect."

"I will; for it is necessary to your future safety. No doubt the villain, whoever he is, mistook the clothes on the back of the chair, which you say was standing directly before the window, for you, and—and—" Here the increasing weight of Catalina arrested his attention, and looking in her face, he saw

her pale as death. In a moment after her strength forsook her, and she sank in his arms overpowered by the sense of past as well as future probable dangers. Sybrandt placed her softly upon a little grass terrace, hid from view by a wilderness of flowering shrubs, and supporting her head on his bosom, waited in wild perturbation her recovery. In a little while she opened her eyes, blushed, and raised herself from his arms.

At length she said, with a languid smile, "You must forgive me, I am but a woman."

"And I am but a man," said Sybrandt warmly; "yet here I swear never to rest till I have dragged this secret villain to light and punishment. And if you, my dear cousin, will allow me, I here solemnly devote myself to your safety from this time forward. When I am not by your side, I will be hovering around you unseen, watching every being that approaches you, or searching every secret corner where man or beast might conceal himself. Henceforward it is the business—the duty—the painful, solemn pleasure of my existence to live for your safety, and, if necessary, to die in your defence. Do you—do you value me sufficiently to trust me with the precious charge?"

The soft and swelling bosom of Catalina heaved with emotions of gratitude, confidence, and gentle tenderness as she looked in his face with glistening eyes, and answered,

"I do value you sufficiently, and I will trust my cousin. Who else can I trust? I dare not tell the story of this bullet to my father and mother; for it would plant thorns in their pillow, and destroy their happiness. I *must* trust you," added she, with a smile of languid, tender meaning; "and if I were not obliged to do it, still I believe I *should* trust you."

"Dear Catalina! but you know me—that is enough."

"Yes, we know each other, I trust," replied she, with a look of unbounded confidence and affection. Sybrandt did not take advantage of this moment to tell a tale of love. There was something too solemn and affecting in the circumstances that gave rise to this interview. The idea of the danger and death that seemed hovering over her; of the secret midnight murderer who was besetting her steps wherever she went, and watching her sleeping and waking, communicated to her an air of sanctity, and gave to her glowing beauty, her confiding words, and tender looks, a holy innocence, which, while it melted the soul in unutterable tenderness, repressed every selfish wish and every sensual desire. It was settled ere they separated, that Catalina should refrain from going out in future alone, or in the dusk of the evening, and never show herself at the window after dark, until Sybrandt had taken every measure to investigate this mysterious affair, and detect the meditating murderer. To this object he was now about to devote his exclusive attention, animated by his love, as well as by the hope that, guided as he should be by a latent suspicion which had risen up in his mind, he might succeed in the attempt.

"What the d—I have you two been doing all this while in the garden?" cried Ariel, who had arrived during their absence, and looked very knowing as he asked the question.

"Picking flowers," answered Catalina, blushing and then turning pale.

"Picking a quarrel, I should rather suppose, by your looks," and then he began to banter them a little; but seeing the pain it gave them both, he was

too good-natured to pursue the amusement. Honest Ariel never uttered a maxim in his life, but he acted upon a very good one, to wit, never to carry jesting to the verge of malignity, as many people do. When he saw he gave pain, he desisted in a moment. Perhaps he might have been a little influenced in his self-denial on this occasion by a sly retort of Catalina, who, in reply to an assertion that he overheard their whisperings, observed, with some of her wonted arch significance, that "it was only the humming of the bees."

Sybrandt soon after took his leave, declining an invitation from Ariel to go and see the great ox the good man visited every day, and on whose fat sirloin he banqueted in glorious anticipation. The young man pursued his way homeward in deep meditation, of a mingled character of pleasure and pain. The delight of having, as he could not but hope, gained an interest in the heart of Catalina thrilled through his frame. Yet the cup was dashed with black and bitter ingredients. The treasure which he hoped one day to make his own was in danger of being torn from him by some unseen and unknown hand, against which it behooved him to guard with sleepless vigilance. The dark idea of death mingled with the bright visions of hope, and gave a character of deep, intense solemnity to his love. His anticipations seemed like flowers blooming on the verge of the grave, and the grim spectre of mortality stalked hand in hand with the smiling cherubs Love and Hope. Out of these conflicting feelings arose, however, a fixed determination to devote his time, his talents, and his life, if necessary, to the great purpose which now took possession of his whole soul.

CHAPTER XXI.

A trial of Skill.

IN casting about among the rural population of the neighbourhood, there was but one person on whom Sybrandt could fasten the slightest suspicion, and that was Captain Pipe. He knew the persevering spirit of revenge which animates the sons of the forest, and the patience with which they watch and wait the moment of attaining their object. He remembered the bitter resentment he had expressed at being discarded by Colonel Vancour, and recalled to mind the look of keen, deep malignity he had cast on Catalina, as they were carrying him to prison the day of the affray at the mansion-house. He knew that an Indian never forgives. His sudden change after his release from prison—his apparent piety, industry, and sobriety, and the circumstance of the purchase of the gun—all arose in succession to the recollection of Sybrandt, and seemed to indicate some deep settled purpose in the mind of the Indian. There was no one else he could suspect, for the character of the neighbourhood was that of sober, quiet simplicity, and no strangers had been known to visit it for a long time past. The result of these reflections was a determination to watch the motions of Captain Pipe from that time forward, and, if possible, to do so without exciting his suspicions.

His first step was to tempt him to remain under his eye, by offering him high wages in the employ of

Mr. Dennis Vancour. Accordingly he sought him out for the purpose, and the Indian acceded to his proposal without any apparent suspicion of his real object. He came the next day; and that day, and every other day, Sybrandt, under various pretences, took care to have him perpetually under his eye, avoiding every appearance of design. The Indian had his eye on him, also, and though he discovered no indications of being aware of this perpetual supervision, his own cunning conscious heart whispered a suspicion that redoubled his watchful self-command.

"What have you done with your musket, captain?" said Sybrandt, one day, suddenly; and fixing his eye upon him, he fancied he could detect a slight start as the Indian caught the question. It was, however, so almost imperceptible that it might have been mere fancy.

"I left it at home," said he.

"Why so? there is plenty of game about this house, as well as at Colonel Vancour's."

"I never heard there was much game about the colonel's."

"O, plenty! fine shooting, especially in the night. The birds sometimes sit in the windows to be shot at."

The Indian, who was at that moment stooping down, turned an upward glance of scorn at Sybrandt.

"I am no fool—the Indian's game does not sit in the windows."

"Why not? suppose you were to see a beautiful deer, standing looking out at a window at night, would you not be tempted to shoot it?"

"Maybe I might," said the captain, gruffly.

"But if your gun was to miss fire on account of the damps, or the deer was to turn out only a sham,

what would you do then, captain?" said Sybrandt, affecting to be in jest.

"I'd look sharper another time."

Sybrandt fancied he was probing the Indian without his suspecting it, but he understood the allegory perfectly, and only wrapped himself up the more closely in the impenetrable folds of savage hypocrisy. He never went out of sight of the house during the day, and though Sybrandt took every means for the purpose, he could never ascertain that he was absent at night. On one occasion he rode out, taking care to say in the hearing of the captain that he was going to Albany, and should not return till the morrow. He then actually went to the city, from whence he returned after midnight, leaving his horse in a field at a considerable distance. He found that the captain had not left the house, nor did he leave it that night.

By degrees he appeared to relax his watchfulness, for the purpose of throwing the captain off his guard. He left him frequently, but it was only to visit Catalina, who always received him with a gentle melancholy welcome, that went straight to his heart. "You come so seldom now; but I know the reason, and thank you," would she say. It was evident that she laboured under a deep feeling of oppression. There was no longer any elasticity of spirits, and the roses of her cheek gradually changed to lilies. Sybrandt's heart would almost burst with sorrowful tenderness when he saw how she suffered, under the sad consciousness that the arrow of death was pointed at her bosom, she knew not when or by whom, and that every moment might be her last. An inexpressible tenderness, a solemn sympathy, a union of feelings partaking o

time and eternity, grew up between them ; and their affections became almost as pure as those of the fabled spirits with which the imagination has peopled the region of the skies.

But the caution of the savage never slept for a moment ; and, so far as any one knew, he never availed himself of the absence of Sybrandt to neglect his employment, and leave the house, except for a few moments at a time. Still suspicion lingered in the mind of Sybrandt, and when, finally, the captain had finished his work, and there was no longer any pretext for retaining him, he relaxed not his vigilance, but continued to keep a wary eye upon him wherever he went. There are no people in the world, perhaps, so cunning and suspicious, so expert in surprising and so difficult to be surprised, as the sons of the forest. Continually at war, either with their neighbours or with the wild beasts, they are for ever under the necessity of perpetual watchfulness. A thousand appearances and indications that escape the notice of civilized men, convey lessons of caution and experience to the savage : like the tracks in the forest, which the white man cannot see, they are visible to the Indian, and serve either as guides to pursue or warnings to avoid an enemy. Thus, notwithstanding all the care Sybrandt took to disguise his system of espionage, the wary instinct of Captain Pipe very soon taught him that he was suspected and watched.

One day, not many days after the period of quitting his employment at Mr. Dennis Vancour's, he came over to the mansion-house, and announced his intention of quitting that part of the country, and spending the rest of his days among the remnant of his countrymen in Canada. "You pre

vented my being burned by the Mohawks," said he to Colonel Vancour ; "you saved my life, but you turned me out of doors. The Indian never forgets." The colonel gave him a variety of little presents that would be useful among his countrymen, telling him at the same time to remember what he owed to the white men, and be their friend whenever it was in his power.

"The Indian never forgets, nor forgives," replied the captain, pronouncing the latter part of the sentence to himself, and grating his teeth. Colonel Vancour was not deceived. He said in his heart, "That fellow is the enemy of me and mine ; thank Heaven, he is going away for ever."

CHAPTER XXII.

Our Hero loses his character for morals and gallantry.

THE next day the miserable cabin which the captain had built for himself was found shut up and deserted. The Indian had been seen at daylight, with his gun and his pack, wending his course to the northward, as was supposed, on his way to Canada. His departure freed Catalina from the load of cares, fears, and anxieties which had oppressed her for months past. This depression of Catalina, and the total cessation of her rural rides and rambles had affected the health of that young lady, and attracted the notice of her parents. They frequently questioned her on the cause, but she either denied the effect, or passed the subject off with evasions, which only excited increased anxiety as well as curiosity. They continued to urge her in vain to resume her usual amusements and exercises, until now that being freed in a great measure from her apprehensions of Captain Pipe, she soon gathered courage and spirits to smile and be happy again.

It was not so with Sybrandt. He could not conquer his suspicions that the captain was lurking somewhere in the woods not far off. He had traced him about three miles on the road towards the north, and there lost sight of him; nor could he find, by the most minute inquiries, that he had been seen on any other road leading from the neighbourhood. But he thought it would be cruel to mention these

suspicious to Catalina. He contented himself with being with her wherever she went, and perambulating about the mansion-house the better part of every night. Honest Dennis took him to task more than once for the nightly dissipations in which it was suspected he now indulged, and Sybrandt had the painful mortification of seeing that he was daily offending his benefactor almost past forgiveness. The news of his having become such a rake soon spread abroad; for what secret was ever kept in a country neighbourhood? It reached the mansion-house, with divers handsome additions, such as that of gambling, drinking, and seduction. The colonel and Madam Vancour began to behave coolly towards him; Catalina only reproached him with her looks and increasing paleness. She withdrew herself gradually from his society, and seldom came into the room when he happened to be on a visit.

Sybrandt was half-distracted with perplexing anguish. He asked of himself whether he should poison the happiness of Catalina and her parents, by telling them the cause of his nocturnal rambles from home; or leave the poor girl in ignorance and unprotected; or sacrifice himself, his character, and his happiness. "It is better that she should believe me a sot and a profligate," thought he, "than to wither and fade, as she did before, in the nightly apprehension of being murdered. If there must be a victim, it shall be myself." He continued his course of watchfulness, and by degrees the supposed irregularities of his conduct banished him from the society of her he most loved on earth. Catalina refused any longer to see him, and now seldom went abroad, except once in a great while to Albany with her mother.

Observing the increasing paleness and depression of spirits in their daughter, the colonel and Madam Vancour, after consulting together, and combining various circumstances, finally agreed in the suspicion that Catalina was attached to her cousin, whose ill-conduct had occasioned her unhappiness. In that case each agreed it was best to separate the young people for some time; and accordingly it was resolved to accept an invitation from a near relative of Catalina, to come and spend the winter with her in New-York. "The sooner the better," said the colonel; "it is now late in autumn, and I will take her to town immediately."

The proposal was made to Catalina, who offered no objections, and the preparations were soon made. It was not customary to travel with so many trunks and bandboxes as young ladies do in these days. The next time Sybrandt called at the mansion-house with a message from his benefactor, Catalina said to herself she would see him once, only once, before she went away for so many months. "I owe him for a life which he has rendered of little worth; but I will see him once more," said she to herself.

She went down stairs, where she found Sybrandt alone. The old people had gone out to pay a morning visit. Sybrandt started at the alteration a few weeks had produced in Catalina, and she shrunk at his hollow cheeks and sunken eyes. "It is remorse and dissipation," thought she. Rallying the pride and dignity of virtuous woman, she, however, addressed him with a frank kindness that went to his heart.

"I am going," said she, "to spend the winter in New-York. We set out the day after to-morrow."

"Thank God! thank God!" exclaimed Sybrandt, with clasped hands.

Indignation swelled at the heart of the young lady at this ungallant, nay, insulting exclamation. A sudden paleness was instantly succeeded by a flush of rosy red, and a flash of her bright blue eye. This too passed away, and a paleness still more deadly succeeded.

At length she rallied again. "So you are glad I am going," she said, with a languid smile.

"O yes, rejoiced beyond measure."

"Indeed!" said she; the tears gathering in her eyes. "Indeed—you—you—but I cannot help admiring your frankness. I see you are no hypocrite *now* at least."

Sybrandt all at once recollected himself, and coloured at the sudden perception of the apparent rudeness of his conduct.

"Forgive me, dear Catalina. I did not know what I was saying, or rather I was not conscious at the moment of the strange appearance my words would have. Forgive me."

"I do; but," added she, swallowing the mingled bitterness of wounded pride and affection. "But may I ask, cousin Sybrandt, if you really meant what you said?"

"I did; but"—

"Enough. Farewell. Since you are so happy, it is needless for me to wish your happiness. But I do wish it with all my soul. It will be long before we meet again. Farewell."

"Stay, dear cousin, dear Catalina."

"Dear Catalina," said she, with bitter scorn. "Do we thank God when we part with those who are dear to us? Spare your hypocrisy, sir, and take my last farewell."

"Catalina, before you go I will account for my conduct. Permit me to see you to-morrow; then all shall be explained."

"All is explained already. I am now satisfied, quite satisfied;" and she moved slowly towards the door.

"You will one day be sorry for this. O, hear me, I beseech you, now, since I am not to see you again;" and he placed himself between her and the door.

"Let me pass, sir," cried she, passionately. "I say again I want no explanations. Your words and actions have both been sufficiently expressive of late. Let me pass."

He obeyed her, bowing lowly and sorrowfully. At the door she turned full upon him, and, clasping her hands, exclaimed with fervour, "Thank God, I *am* going."

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Pipe is broken at last.

SYBRANDT went away in bitterness of heart, but with a determination, if possible, to see Catalina once again before she departed, and give her a full explanation of his late conduct. In the mean time he did not for a moment relax in his vigilance. The night turned out dark and blustering; the frost-bitten leaves fell thick before the damp, piercing, north-east wind, whose shrill moanings mingled with the dashing of the waves along the pebbly shores of the river. The young man was on his watch as usual when the night set in, and as usual saw nothing to excite suspicion, until about ten o'clock, when he perceived the window of Catalina's room raised, and the little black waiting-maid standing with a light before it, calling to some one in the kitchen. Immediately after he fancied he heard a more than usual stir in the little copsewood, close by where he stood, and that he could distinguish in the pauses of the wind the suppressed breathing of some one near. The darkness was now intense, and no object could be distinctly seen save those immediately within the range of the light from the window. A shadow passing to and fro within the room showed that some one else was there besides the little attendant, and his heart beat thick with agony while it whispered it must be Catalina. The low breathing still continued, and became quicker

and quicker. Shall I call out to Catalina to beware ? thought he. No : that would only bring her to the window to see what was the matter. Shall I go and alarm the house ? No : in the interim her life may be taken.—Quick as thought these ideas crossed his mind, and quick as thought he darted into the thicket, as he beheld Catalina approach the window to speak to some one below, and heard a clicking sound like the cocking of a gun. As he did so he distinguished a single low exclamation of surprise, and immediately some one seemed making his way violently through the branches. Sybrandt followed the sound as fast as possible, and once or twice fancied he saw something moving a little way before him. But whatever it was it evaded all his exertions, and, favoured by the darkness of the night, escaped his pursuit. On his return the shutters of Catalina's room were closed, and believing her safe for the night, he determined not to alarm the family.

The next day Catalina, unconscious of the danger that hovered around her, took a fancy to stroll to the little rocky dell we have heretofore described as a favourite resort of Sybrandt, where he was once accustomed to retire to conjure up spectres of misery and mortification. In happier times they had been used to visit it together, and it was associated in the mind of Catalina with many hours of innocent happiness. She wished to see it once more before she left the country ; led by that attractive sympathy which for ever draws the heart towards scenes of past enjoyment. The morning was one of the favourite progeny of autumn. The indications of the storm the night before had passed away, and were succeeded by a still, clearhazy sky, a pure elastic air, that never fails to waken pleasant feel-

ings in the heart where they are not asleep for ever. As she passed onward the blue-bird chirped his plaintive notes of farewell ere he went to seek the summer in some more genial climate; the grasshoppers, awakened from the torpor of the chilly night, were sporting and chirping as gay as ever, forgetful of the past, and happily careless of the future; the grass under her feet began to show a pale and sickly yellowness, and every instant some portion of the party-coloured robes of the woods fell whispering to the ground, again to mingle with the dust which first gave it life and maturity. All was calm, and beautiful, and touching. It was beauty smiling in the consciousness of being still lovely, yet sighing in the certainty that youth is past; that she has already gained the summit hill of life, is now descending into the vale, and though the prospect is still fair to look upon, it is every day contracting into a single point, beyond which there is nothing but eternity. The white columns of smoke ascended straight upwards, uncurled by a breath of wind, and presenting to the contemplative mind images of rural happiness here, of pure and spiritual bliss hereafter. But the feelings of Catalina were not in a state to enjoy the touching beauties of the scene, or the associations it naturally inspired. She passed onwards in painful musings until she came to the little quiet solitude, and, seating herself, soon became buried in the labyrinth of her own perplexities and sorrows.

The residence of Mr. Dennis Vancour was on a little rising ground, which overlooked the extensive meadows spreading along the river, and commanded from its porch a view of the mansion-house. Sybrandt saw Catalina depart; and the course she

pursued, as well as the whispering consciousness of his own heart, told him whither she was going. He turned pale and trembled when he called to mind the circumstances of the preceding night; and taking an opposite direction, hastened to the little glen, determined to hide himself and watch over her safety. He arrived at the spot before her, and concealing himself in the hollow of an immense oak that nodded on the brink of the high precipice, waited what might follow. In a few moments Catalina made her appearance, and seated herself, as we have before described, in a recess among the rocks and trees, just where the bubbling basin at the foot of the cascade laved at her feet against the mossy stones. There was something touching and sorrowful in her attitude and look as she leaned on her hand, and watched the foaming torrent tumbling down the precipice. Now is the time to tell her all, thought Sybrandt, and he forgot his great purpose in coming thither for a moment. Another moment brought it back to his remembrance. Here he remained quiet for somewhat more than half an hour, when he fancied he saw a pair of eyes glaring behind the thick evergreens that skirted the rear of the high rocky precipice. He shrunk closer in his covert, and in another moment saw a head cautiously protruded beyond the bushes. It was that of Captain Pipe. He saw him look cautiously round in every direction; he saw him lay himself down and crawl on his belly, dragging his gun after him towards the edge of the precipice, that he might gain a full view of his victim below,—and he followed him noiselessly, creeping like a shadow rather than a substance. At length the Indian raised himself on his knee, cocked his unerring musket, and carried it to his

cheek. In an instant it was snatched from his grasp, and in another instant the Indian had grappled it again. It went off in the struggle, and Catalina, looking up, saw a sight that recalled all her tenderness and all her fears.

Almost on the verge of the precipice stood Sybrandt and the active, powerful Indian, struggling for life, each almost bursting their sinews to force the other off the brink. Now one, now the other seemed to have the advantage; now the back of one and anon of the other was towards her; and then both seemed to be quivering on the verge of eternity. In vain she attempted to cry out—her voice was lost in the agony of her fears; in vain she attempted to climb the steep—her limbs refused their office. Still the deadly struggle continued, and she saw their quick pantings from the depth below. The gun had been thrown away in the contest, and now they wrestled limb to limb, heart to heart. More than once the Indian attempted to draw his knife, but Sybrandt gave him such full employment for both his hands, that he as often failed in his purpose. But the vigour of the youth was now waning fast, for he had of late become weakened by watching and anxiety. The Indian felt the trembling of his limbs, and heard with savage delight the increased quickness of his breathing. He redoubled his exertions; he grasped him tight in his arms, lifted him off his feet, and hurried him towards the verge of the rock. Sybrandt made a desperate effort; he placed one foot on the rock, and with a quick motion of the other tripped up the heels of the Indian. Both fell, with their heads from the precipice, and their feet actually projecting over its edge. Sybrandt was uppermost, but this was rather

a disadvantage, for the Indian was enabled by violent exertions to edge himself on by degrees, until both were poised on the extremest verge, and hovered on the very brink, being determined to perish with him rather than fail in his purpose. Another moment and all had been over, when fortunately Sybrandt perceived a little evergreen growing out of the rock within his reach. He seized hold of it, and it sustained his grasp. With one hand he held it fast, with the other he suddenly pushed the Indian from under him, and he slipped over the precipice, still grasping the legs of the young man, who now clung to the shrub with both hands, making efforts to shake the Indian from his hold. But for some moments his exertions were vain, and only served to exhaust his remaining strength. Feeling himself gradually relaxing his hold, and every instant growing fainter and fainter, he gathered himself to a last effort. He extricated one of his legs from the grasp of the Indian, and dashed his foot in his face with such convulsive violence, that he loosed his hold, and fell among the pointed rocks which projected out of the pool below. Catalina heard the splashing of his body in the water, and not knowing who it was that had fallen, became insensible. Sybrandt raised himself slowly and with difficulty, and descended as fast as possible towards her. She waked in his arms, and by degrees came to a comprehension of all that had passed.

"Again!" at length said she, looking up tenderly, "Again! yet you thanked God I was going away."

"Cannot you comprehend the reason *now*, dearest Catalina? and will you not listen to what you refused to hear yesterday?"

She cast a shuddering glance at the pool, "I

thought I heard a groan. Perhaps the poor creature yet lives, and may be saved."

"Let him perish!" said the youth, indignantly, "O, if you only knew the days and nights of anxious misery he has occasioned me!"

"And me, yet I pity him."

"And wish he were alive?"

"If I were sure—if I could be made quite sure neither of us could possibly ever see him again. Go, cousin, and see if he is yet alive, but take care!"

Sybrandt went and dragged the body from the pool. It was dreadfully mangled, and apparently lifeless. Catalina shuddered as she cast one look at it.

"Let us go home," said she.

"Will you not listen to my explanation now? You are going away from me to-morrow, and we may never meet again."

"No, dearest Sybrandt. I now see it all. You knew this wretched being had not left the country."

"I did; at least I suspected so from various circumstances."

"And you were every night on the watch, guarding me—*me*—who was accusing you of spending them in gaming, riot, and seduction—yes, seduction—for such was the story I heard. O, blessed Heaven! what short-sighted creatures we are!" And she raised her tearful eye to his, as if to ask forgiveness.

"Was it not so?"

"I confess it was."

"But why did you not tell me you suspected the Indian was still lurking about the neighbourhood?"

"What! and poison all your moments of returning ease and happiness! No: I thought I could guard you from the danger, without making you wretched by knowing it."

"And left me to endure suspicions a thousand times more painful."

"Recollect, dear Catalina, I could not anticipate your suspicions."

"True; and your apprehensions for my safety prompted that ungallant wish," said she, smiling languidly, "'Thank God, you are going.'"

"What else *could* have prompted it, dear love? And yet, much as I feared for you, I did not know half the danger." He then related to her the incidents of the preceding night. She turned deadly pale, and remained silent for a few moments.

"I recollect I stood at the window more than four or five minutes, wondering what was the matter with the dogs. Once—twice—thrice: it is a heavy debt, and how can I repay it?"

"By never doubting me again, till I deceive you."

"That can never be!" exclaimed she, fervently.

"And will you, can you love me, and trust me with your happiness, dearest Catalina?"

"I can—I will," said she, solemnly; "and here, before the body of that dead wretch, who has expiated his intended crimes at your hands; in the presence of that good Being who has preserved me from his vengeance; by the life and all the hopes here and hereafter of the life you have three times, perhaps thrice three times, preserved, I promise to be yours, and to devote myself to your happiness whenever you shall ask it of me. I give myself to you by this kiss, such as no man ever before received from me, and no other ever will again. I give myself away for ever!" And she kissed his forehead with her balmy lips.

"Blessed, for ever blessed, be this day and this hour!" cried Sybrandt, as he folded her in his arms.

"I cannot thank you, dearest, but I am blessed!" and he leaned his head on her shoulder, overpowered by the varying emotions and exertions of the past and present.

"You are hurt!" screamed Catalina.

"'Tis only happiness—I am faint with joy;" and again he leaned his head on her panting bosom. A dreadful shriek from Catalina roused him, and he saw the ghastly Indian close upon him, covered with blood, with his arm raised, and grasping his knife. Before he could take a step to defend himself the blow was given. The knife entered his bosom, and he staggered backwards, but did not fall. In a moment Sybrandt rallied himself, and evading a second blow, closed with the now exhausted and dying wretch, whom he dashed to the ground with furious indignation. The agony of death came upon him, but did not quench his ruling passion of revenge. With convulsive agony he repeatedly buried his knife up to the hilt in the earth, and his last breath expired in a blow.

Poor Catalina, whose mind and body had sunk under the terrible vicissitudes of the day, during this momentary struggle sat wringing her hands, almost unconsciously repeating, "Once—twice—thrice—four times—and then his own! What a dear, dear purchase for a poor girl!"

Sybrandt went to her and said, "Fear nothing, dearest love, he is dead."

"What, Sybrandt! my preserver? Well, no matter. I shall be dead too, soon. The Indian will kill me now my dear preserver is gone."

"Revive, dear love; it is the Indian that is dead: he will never trouble you again."

"I cannot believe it," said she, recovering a little; "I saw the knife enter your bosom, yet you do not

bleed. I am sure you must be wounded. Is there no blood?"

Sybrandt opened his bosom to assure her, and then, for the first time, comprehended the cause of his escaping unhurt. The point of the Indian's knife had left its print in the centre of the ducat which Catalina had given him when he went on his trading voyage, and a piece of it remained sticking there.

"See Catalina," said he, "you have saved my life, and we are now even. Do you take back the gift you just now made me?"

"'Twas Heaven's own doing," she replied; then casting her eyes on the body of the Indian, she shuddered, "Is he dead; are you certain he is dead?"

"He is; come, and be sure of it."

"No, let us quit this miserable being, and, I was going to say, miserable place, though I shall love it as long as I live, and—and you love me," whispered she, soft as the zephyr among the leaves.

"That will be for ever!" cried Sybrandt, and they went their way towards the mansion-house.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A Separation instead of a Union.

THE tale which Catalina had to tell, in explanation of her long absence, may easily be imagined. Thanks and blessings were poured out from the lips of the good parents. The old gentleman called the daughter and the nephew into his presence, and placing her hand in his, solemnly and affectionately blessed them both as his dear children. "You have thrice saved her life, may she prove a blessing to yours."

"D—n it," said little Ariel—"d—n it, Sybrandt, who would have thought it! But come, I want you to go look at old Frelinghuysen's ox. He is grown as big as an elephant."

"It was not for nothing," thought the silent Dennis—"it was not for nothing he studied these old Greeks and Romans. I wish Dominie Stettinius were here to hear this:" and the worthy man felt proud of his adopted son.

And now it became necessary to settle the question whether the visit to New-York should be paid or not paid. All things were prepared, the vessel ready, and the lady-cousin in the capital apprized of her invitation having been accepted. The colonel thought they had better send an apology, and get off as well as they could. Catalina—I confess it with the candour becoming my profession—Cata-

lina fluttered between her love and her desire of novelty. What woman could ever yet resist the temptations of travelling and seeing the world? She, however, dutifully left it to her parents to decide. Madam Vancour was a woman, a very excellent woman—yet she was a woman. She did not exactly oppose the union of the two cousins, but still her heart was not in it. Ambition was too strong for gratitude. Like almost all the American women of that and indeed every succeeding age, she had imbibed, from her earliest years, a silly admiration of every thing foreign; foreign horses, foreign dogs, foreign men, and, most especially, foreign officers. Every thing provincial, as it was called, she considered as bearing the brand of inferiority in its forehead. She had, moreover, long cherished a latent ambition to see Catalina wedded to one of his majesty's little officials, who assumed vast consequence at that time—who tacked honourable to his name, and bore the arms of some one of the illustrious houses who figured in the court calendar, in the midst of griffins, sphinxes, lions, unicorns, vultures, and naked savages with clubs—fit emblems of the rude plunderers who first adopted these apt distinctions. The good lady, was hardly unconscious of her motives, almost hoped that Catalina would forget her rustic Corydon in the gay scenes and various sights of the metropolis, and conquer, and be conquered by, some brilliant aid-de-camp, perhaps a baronet, with bloody hand for his crest. Accordingly it was settled the visit should take place the next day, as was originally contemplated.

Sybrandt yielded with an aching heart and a bad grace to what he could not prevent. The busy fiends and phantoms that beset his earlier days rose

up to his imagination, and flapped their wings, and whispered gloomy anticipations. She would have gay admirers, for she was an heiress and a beauty. She would be distant from her parents, her home, her fireside, and from all those early associations with objects of nature, which serve as anchors by which the heart rides steadily in all the vicissitudes of wind and tide, and calm and tempest. "And then the cursed red-coats," whispered one malignant demon, with a diabolical grin; "if she resists them, and the fashion, and the example of every female, young and old, married and single, she must be more than woman." Such gloomy, irritating, peevish thoughts crowded on his heart the next day, as he accompanied Catalina to the vessel which was to bear her away; but his pride buried them with its own hands deep in his bosom.

"I shall return with the birds in the spring," said she, observing his dead silence. "You must be happy, but you must not forget me," and she placed her snowy hand in his. Sybrandt could scarcely feel it, 'twas so soft.

"Those who are left behind at home never forget," said the youth. "All that I see, and all that I hear, is the same to-day, to-morrow, and the next, and the next day. How then can I change?"

"You think, then, there is more danger that I should change," said Catalina, with a tender smile.

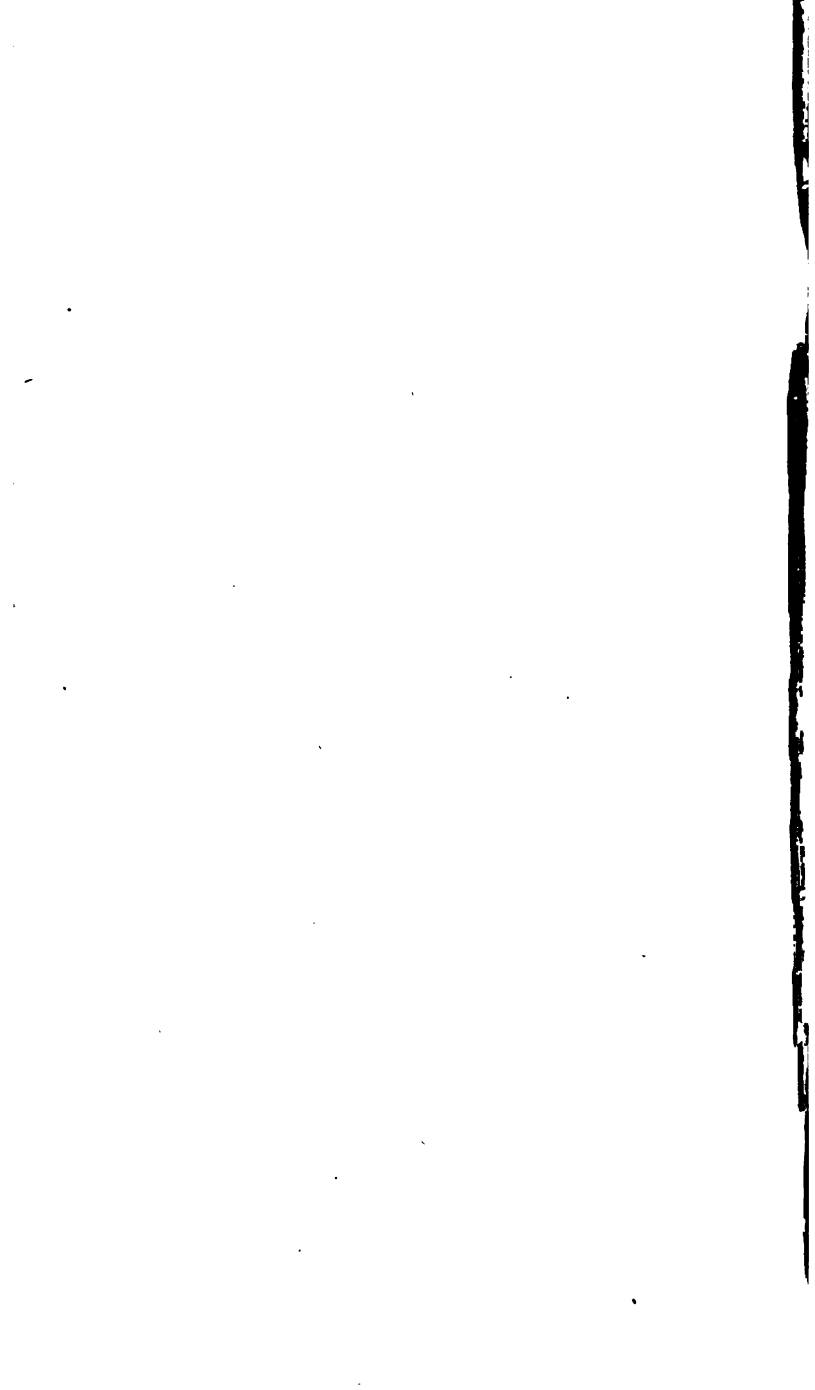
"Such miracles *have* come to pass," replied he, answering her smile with one of melancholy.

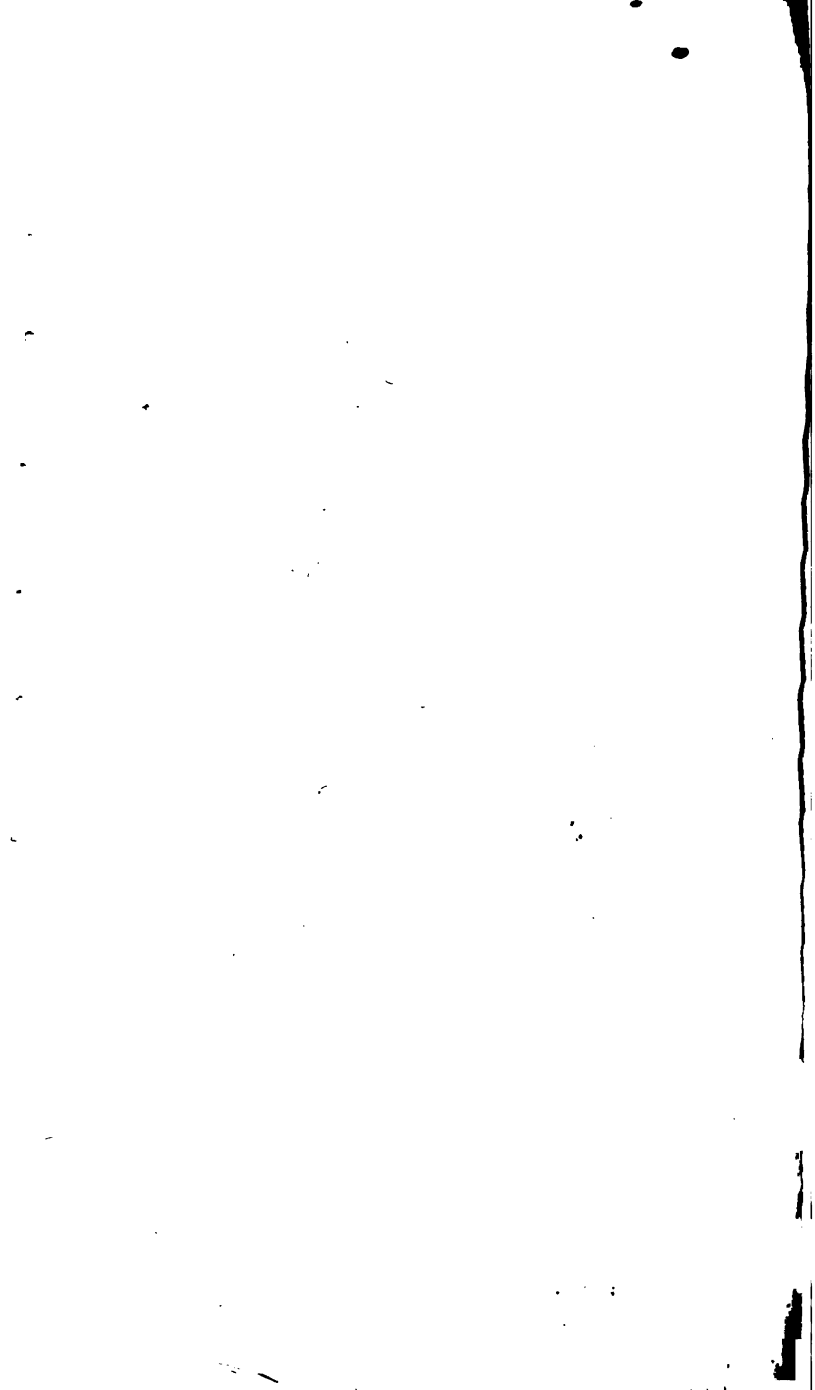
"Sybrandt," said she, with solemn emphasis, "see, the river out of which you dragged me when I was drowning is the same that rolls by the city whither I am now going. I shall see it every day from my window. The sun that shines there by day is the

same that yesterday saw you rescue me from murder; and the same stars that witnessed your nightly watchings for my safety, stand in the firmament there as well as here. The same air, the same light, the same nature, and the same God, the same memory, the same heart, will be with me wherever I go. Be just to me, dear Sybrandt; I cannot, if I would, forget thee!"

The jealous demons fled before this bright emanation of truth and virtue, and Sybrandt became reassured. A silent pressure of hands conveyed their last farewell greetings, and in a few minutes Sybrandt was seen standing alone on a green projecting point of the river, watching the vessel as it glided swiftly out of sight. When it was no longer visible, he turned himself towards home, and the world seemed to him suddenly changed into emptiness and nothing.

END OF VOL. I.





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The Dutchman's fireside : a tale.

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